■ NEWS / A2
GMA wants death penalty law scrapped

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Phivolcs raises alert level at Mayon after volcano emits ash

■ METRO / A23
Police raid smaller version of Pasig's shabu mart in Taguig

■ MOTORING / B6
Car of year update: SUV showdown from entry level to ultra luxury

80 Abanse! Pinay members still missing in Guinsaugon

By Pennie Azarcon-dela Cruz

IT WAS TO BE A WOMEN'S CELEBRATION, BUT the landslide turned it into a tragedy.

And the women, most of them in their 20s, with two in their 60s, are among the 80 Abanse! Pinay members still missing after a rain-soaked mountain slope collapsed on the farming community of Guinsaugon and encased it in mud.

Feb. 17 was the fifth anniversary of the Guin-

80 ABANSE/ A22

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INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Wednesday, February 22, 2006 ★★ 5 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 76 P18 website: www.inq7.net

No more sounds of life under mud up to 30 meters deep

By Volt Contreras

ST. BERNARD, SOUTHERN LEYTE—ON THE FIFTH day, the news from the field turned grim.

Rescuers yesterday stopped picking up sounds or movement that could have indicated survivors in an area where they hoped to find a school buried in the landslide, three field officials, including a foreign expert, told the INQUIRER.

Hopes of a miracle had focused on the school

NO MORE/ A22

GMA: I'm best person to lead

President sees no need to cut short her term

The way it was: Confetti to rain on Ayala Avenue

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THIS WAS THE WAY IT WAS, martial law babies.

Confetti will again rain down on Ayala Avenue in Makati City on Friday afternoon, as the opposition bulwark reprises vigorous anti-dictatorship protests in the financial district that became a prelude to Edsa I.

In remembrance of the four-day civilian-backed uprising in February 1986, person-

THE WAY/ A9

LUMILINGON SA PINANG-GALINGAN!
JOAN BONDOC

TIE A YELLOW RIBBON: Edsa is now full of the signature color of the Filipino on the days he decided to go out there and regain his freedom.

Stories scarred survivors tell

By Volt Contreras

ST. BERNARD, SOUTHERN Leyte—As the digging for survivors of Friday morning's massive landslide went into its sixth day today, the streets of St. Bernard remained abuzz with countless tales connected to the disaster.

The stories ranged from those of rescuers pulling out a man's corpse that was cut in half, to a cop who had been disarmed lest he run amuck after losing his entire family.

Then there was the story of a grandmother being rushed to the hospital after helicopters frightened her and made her blood pressure shoot up, and another story of a resident leaving town because her house stood next to the makeshift morgue and she could no longer stand the smell.

In one evacuation center, a man presented himself yesterday to the INQUIRER with his own tale of survival—brimming with details and apocalyptic horror.

Felipe Nerio, 59, said he considered himself lucky for having

STORIES/ A22

By Christine O. Avendaño

COUP ATTEMPTS AND "sham" people power will be a thing of the past should the country shift to the parliamentary system, according to President Macapagal-Arroyo, and by her own reckoning she is the best person to lead the transition.

Speaking yesterday before the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines (Focap), the President also said she did not believe that once the parliamentary system of government was adopted, she would have to cut short her term.

She again raised the need to amend the 1987 Constitution, saying that doing so would "create greater political certainty" in the country.

Ms Arroyo expressed the belief that like the tough economic reforms she had been carrying out, amending the Charter would "unchain our society and allow it to grow and prosper."

There will be no need for

GMA/ A7

Fugitive Magdalo seized inside communist lair

By Marlon Ramos
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau
Nikko Dizon
and Luige del Puerto

THE RICE AND *TINAPA* (SMOKED fish) were still hot. Another dish was still cooking.

From all indications, 1st Lt. Lawrence San Juan, a fugitive Magdalo soldier, and communist rebel leaders were going to have a "breakfast meeting" at their Batangas hideout, according to the Philippine Air Force (PAF) spokesperson, Lt. Col. Restituto Padilla.

But before San Juan and his new comrades could partake of the meal and discuss whatever their agenda was, a platoon from the 740th Combat Group of the PAF Special Operations Wing assaulted the rest house and arrested them.

Padilla's information came directly from Air Force Col. Cris Tumanda who led the early morning assault.

"He (Tumanda) said there was radish salad, various dips and other kinds of fish still being cooked," Padilla told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

San Juan was one of four Magdalo leaders who escaped from detention in Fort Bonifacio, Makati City, on Jan. 17 while on trial for the Oakwood mutiny in 2003 and who had since called for the ouster of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Another Magdalo leader, Marine Capt. Nicanor Faeldon, was arrested in late January.

Senior Supt. Francisco Don Montenegro, Batangas police director, said San Juan was in a white Mitsubishi Adventure with lawyer Jose Chris Belmonte and a certain Albert Guyal when they were intercepted at about 5:45 p.m. at a checkpoint.

TO CATCH A REBEL: Lt. Lawrence San Juan is arrested near Padre Garcia town in Batangas. He was with a nephew of Quezon City Mayor Sonny Belmonte. But 2 NPA leaders escaped. REM ZAMORA

Belmonte was behind the wheel. The vehicle was registered to a Pedro Naval, according to Montenegro.

He said police put up the check-

FUGITIVE/ A5

THE PEOPLE

Almonte tips off Cory camp on coup

By **Jose 'Peping' Cojuangco Jr.**
with Jose Victor Z. Torres

(The following are excerpts from a book commissioned by Jose Cojuangco Jr. mostly based on interviews with him.)

IT WAS A VISIT FROM COL. JOSE ALmonte at Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr.'s house that tipped off the businessman that something was going to happen that third week of February 1986.

"He told me not to let Cory leave Manila. 'We're about to move'," Cojuangco narrates.

What Almonte was asking was difficult to do. The opposition was in the middle of its civil disobedience campaign against Marcos. Their next stop was Cebu, then Davao. This had already been planned in advance and it might be impossible to back out.

Cojuangco told Almonte that he would consult his sister.

It had been a week since President Ferdinand Marcos was proclaimed President by his rubber stamp Batasang Pambansa on Feb. 15 following the snap election that was marred by fraud and violence.

Under pressure from Washington, Marcos agreed to call a presidential election to prove that he still had the "people's mandate." His opponent was Corazon Aquino, widow of his assassinated archrival, Benigno Aquino Jr.

The day after the proclamation, Aquino called

ALMONTE/ A26

Son, girlfriend arrested on suspicion of murder

Persuade Marcos to step down

INQUIRER

BARRICADED IN CAMP AGUINALDO

Enrile, Ramos lead 'revolt' against FM

FEB. 22, 1986, issue of the INQUIRER.

THE PALACE

Marcos would not leave; his family refused to leave him

By **Rita B. Gadi**

(Last of two parts)

MALACAÑANG WAS AGONIZING but no one, not even Marcos, seemed to be in control.

On the grounds, there were tanks, soldiers and piled sandbags. And the entire First Family was huddled in the Palace rooms.

Marcos was on the phone with Enrile, with Bosworth, with some generals and, finally, with US Sen. Paul Laxalt.

It was when it became apparent that Marcos would not leave Malacañang, and his family would not leave him either, that the Palace was bombed by an unmarked helicopter on the morning of Feb. 24.

There were no casualties, but there was heavy damage on the roof deck.

A call from the US Embassy to the bureau editor of the Malacañang Press Corps intimated that American Marines would launch an offensive on the Palace if Marcos were to attack the rebel camps at Edsa. The earlier movement of US warships into Subic Bay backed the threat.

It was reported that the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Enterprise, the USS Arkansas, the USS D.R. Ray, the USS Bagley, the USS Reasoner,

MARCOS/ A27

THE MILITARY

A cool psywar expert rules the war room

By **Roilo Golez**

IT WAS AN EASY DRIVE THROUGH the main gate of Camp Aguinaldo on Feb. 22, 1986. There were no people yet although there were many fully armed soldiers at the Defense Ministry building.

I was immediately besieged by media people. Since I was then Postmaster General, I was asked: "Are you here as the emissary of Malacañang?" I didn't respond, waved off the cameras and microphones and went to the office of Minister Juan Ponce Enrile.

Inside were Commissioner Ramon Farolan, in fatigue battle gear, looking very aggrieved and retired Armed Forces Chief of Staff Romeo Espino. Their presence surprised me as both were identified with Marcos.

I got down to business immediately and asked Enrile: "Mr. Minister, are you serious about your declaration to break away from Marcos?" Enrile and I had shared many moments in previous days. I valued him as a mentor. He replied: "Yes, Roilo."

I looked at his eyes, saw the steely determination and told him: "In that case, I am going to announce my resignation as Postmaster General." I then went out and the media people again ganged up on me and I announced my resignation, giving them a copy of my resignation letter.

A COOL/ A20

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern Luzon will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers, while the eastern section of Visayas and the whole of Mindanao will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers.

COMPILED BY JAMIE ALARCON, PDI RESEARCH/02/22/06 SOURCE PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

GMA: I'll work to scrap death penalty

FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE TAKING OFFICE IN 2001, President Macapagal-Arroyo has categorically stated that she was for scrapping capital punishment and that she would see to the immediate passage of legislation to abolish the Death Penalty Law.

"I am all in favor of repealing the death penalty [law] and when it comes to the committee level [in Congress], I will certify it," said the President, who spoke at a forum of the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines.

The President made it clear that she wanted the death penalty scrapped because of her Catholic beliefs and not because she wanted to get on the good side of the Catholic bishops, some of whom are supporting demands for her to resign.

Ms Arroyo made the statement when she was asked about her often changing position on capital punishment.

She was asked to explain why she voted as a senator for lethal injection as a mode of execution; or why when she was Vice President she joined a street march for the execution of Leo Echegaray, the first convict to be executed under the revived Death Penalty Law; and why when she became President, she granted so many reprieves to death convicts.

The 1987 Constitution abolished the death penalty. However, Congress revived the Death Penalty Law which took effect on Jan. 1, 1993. The law was later amended in March 1996, prescribing lethal injection as the method of execution.

The President denied having voted for the Death Penalty Law but said she voted for lethal injection because she thought it was "a more humane way of executing the death penalty."

She said she joined the street march because it was a march for justice. The President said she was not invited to any march for Echegaray's execution and neither did she say anything about his execution.

Ms Arroyo also said that early in her presidency, she had said that she was in favor of executing some convicts "because at that time kidnapping incidents were rampant."

She said that there were times when you have to resort to extreme measures to drive a message home.

"But really, Divine Providence has been very good to me. By the time the death penalty was to be imposed on a kidnapper, kidnapping had gone down to zero," she said.

To the question if she was seeking the repeal of the death penalty as a political accommodation to Catholic bishops, Ms Arroyo insisted she was "pro-life."

"It's a question of my Catholic beliefs. I was born and baptized and raised a Catholic," she said.

Deposed President Joseph Estrada, who approved the execution of seven death convicts, declared a moratorium on executions in 2000 in deference to the Catholic Church's Jubilee Year.

Christine O. Avendaño

Palace to opposition: Don't use pork for Leyte victims

By Gil Cabacungan Jr., Norman Bordadora and Michael Lim Ubac

WHILE HOUSE SPEAKER JOSE de Venecia was urging legislators to donate part of their pork barrel for the relief and rehabilitation of landslide victims in Southern Leyte, Malacañang yesterday slammed opposition legislators for wanting to do the same thing and accused them of politicking.

Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor said opposition lawmakers like Rep. Francisco Escudero should dig deep into their pockets rather than their pork barrel in making donations to victims of natural disasters.

"Probably, they should donate their own money. They don't need to wait for the CDF (Countryside Development Fund) to help the Leyte victims," said Defensor, bristling at the opposition's complaints about the slow release of their pork barrel funds while administration allies had been given theirs.

Defensor said he did not know why the opposition members had not yet received their pork barrel. He said charges that the budget office was withholding the funds because of the opposition's attempt to impeach President Macapagal-Arroyo last year showed that the opposition would stop at nothing to push their agenda.

House Majority leader Prospero Nograles, who had donated P100,000 from his pork barrel, also known as Priority Development Assistance Fund, took a swipe at party-list groups for not doing the same thing.

"We have a tragedy in St. Bernard where many poor people are affected. But what are they doing to help landslide victims?" Nograles said, adding, "Did these people help? Yet they say they speak for the poor."

All 25 party-list lawmakers receive P40 million each per year in PDAF, similar to the amount enjoyed by the rest of the 236-member chamber.

Nograles said Malacañang and De Venecia were "moving heaven and earth to help," while others were still busy politicking.

On Friday night, De Venecia prodded legislators to raise a "rapid reaction fund" to aid the victims. He donated P250,000 from his own pocket and Deputy Speaker Raul del Mar gave P100,000, as they launched the fund following a call to Southern Leyte Rep. Roger Mercado hours after the landslide struck.

De Venecia urged both opposition and administration congressmen to donate between P50,000 and P100,000 from their pork barrel to raise P23 million.

"The tragedy demands that each of us must respond immediately and come to the aid of our stricken countrymen in Southern Leyte," he said.

Meanwhile, Negros Oriental Rep. Jacinto Paras criticized Senate President Franklin Drilon for announcing he was donating P20 million from his pork barrel although Drilon had announced long ago that he had given up his pork barrel altogether.

"We all appreciate his generosity but I can't help but wonder where on earth will he get his P20 million because to my understanding, he is one of those who was supposed to have given up their PDAF," Paras said.

Wencelito Andanar, acting secretary of interior and local government, called on the country's local executives, from governors and mayors to barangay officials, to contribute to the Leyte relief effort.

Andanar said he was asking the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines to pass a resolution enjoining its members to mobilize for the relief operations in St. Bernard.

He thanked local government units that had sent funds and goods to the area.

"It is heartwarming to note that during calamities like the one that happened in Southern Leyte, our LGUs are ready to extend their all-out support to ease the pain and suffering of the victims," Andanar said.

Noynoy loses his post

A RESHUFFLE IN THE House of Representatives yesterday saw Tarlac Rep. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III losing his post as deputy speaker for Luzon.

Aquino, who voted to impeach President Macapagal-Arroyo last year, was replaced by Ilocos Sur Rep. Eric Singson. Singson in turn was replaced by Pangasinan Rep. Generoso Tulagan as chair of the committee on public works.

Bukidnon Rep. Nereus Acosta, who also voted to impeach Ms Arroyo, lost the chairmanship of the committee on ecology.

He was replaced by Manila Rep. Miles Roces.

Cebu Rep. Clavell Martinez, another pro-impeachment legislator, lost her seat on the Commission on Appointments. She was replaced by Antipolo Rep. Victor Sumulong.

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, erstwhile chair of the committee on economic affairs, was tapped to be the chair of the committee on appropriations following the appointment of Camarines Sur Rep. Rolando Andaya Jr. as budget secretary.

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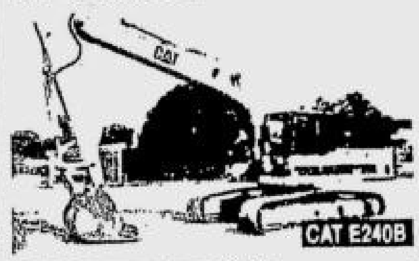
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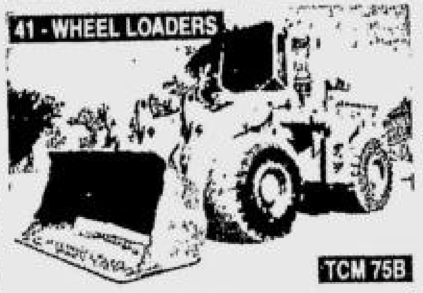
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Filipinos hardly upbeat about '06

THIRTY PERCENT OF FILIPINOS believe their personal lives would improve in the next 12 months, according to a quality of life survey conducted by the Social Weather Stations from Nov. 27 to Dec. 4, 2005.

The SWS 4th quarter 2005 survey also showed that 23 percent of respondents nationwide expected their quality of life to get worse, for a net personal optimism score of 7.

The SWS pointed out that this outlook was hardly an improvement on the net personal optimism score of zero in the August 2005 survey, when 26 percent said they were optimistic and 27 percent said they were pessimistic.

The SWS issues the results of its quarterly surveys piecemeal. The results of the personal quality of life survey were released yesterday.

On Dec. 29, 2005, the SWS released results of the same 4th quarter 2005 survey, showing that 85 percent of Filipinos said they would face the New Year with hope, compared to 12 percent who said they would enter 2006 with fear.

The SWS explained that the portion tracking personal optimism, which features in every quarterly survey, was different from the "hope or fear for the New Year" item, which is tracked only during the fourth quarter of every year.

SWS said it also asked respondents to compare their quality of life at present to that of 12 months ago. Nineteen percent said it had gotten better, while 44 percent claimed it had worsened, for a net of minus 25.

This was statistically similar to the previous quarter's net score of minus 26, with 21 percent as gainers and 47 percent as losers.

The proportion of losers has stayed at 40 percent for more than five years, the SWS said.

"Since the time series began in 1983, losers have generally predominated over gainers," SWS said in a statement.

"It was only during the early years of the Aquino administration when the two groups were roughly equal, showing a happier state of affairs then," it said.

Large gaps between losers and gainers also showed up at the height of the Gulf War and in the last years of the Marcos and Estrada administrations, SWS said.

As for the economy, 16 percent of respondents said they were optimistic about it while 47 percent were pessimistic. This was similar to the August 2005 results, in which 12 percent declared themselves optimistic and 51 percent said they were pessimistic. *Jamie Alarcon, PDI Research*

Trial could take toll on Erap, says doc

THE JOURNEY FROM HIS REST house in Tanay, Rizal, to the Sandiganbayan Complex in Quezon City for his plunder trial could take a toll on the health of deposed President Joseph Estrada, according to Estrada's United States-based surgeon.

"From a purely medical standpoint," it would be better if the disgraced leader were to be allowed to stay somewhere close to the Sandiganbayan for the duration of his testimony, said Dr. Christopher Mow.

"From my understanding, he will be driven from Tanay to the court in the morning and will sit in the witness stand to be questioned all day. Afterwards he will take the same long trip back to Tanay," observed Mow, who successfully performed knee-replacement surgery on Estrada in Hong Kong in December 2004.

Estrada is scheduled to testify in his plunder and perjury trial on March 15 and every Wednesday after that. The court has reduced the trial days from twice to only once a week for the duration of Estrada's testimony.

Apart from the toll of the long journey to and from Tanay, Estrada is physically fit to stand the rigors of a day-long trial, said Mow.

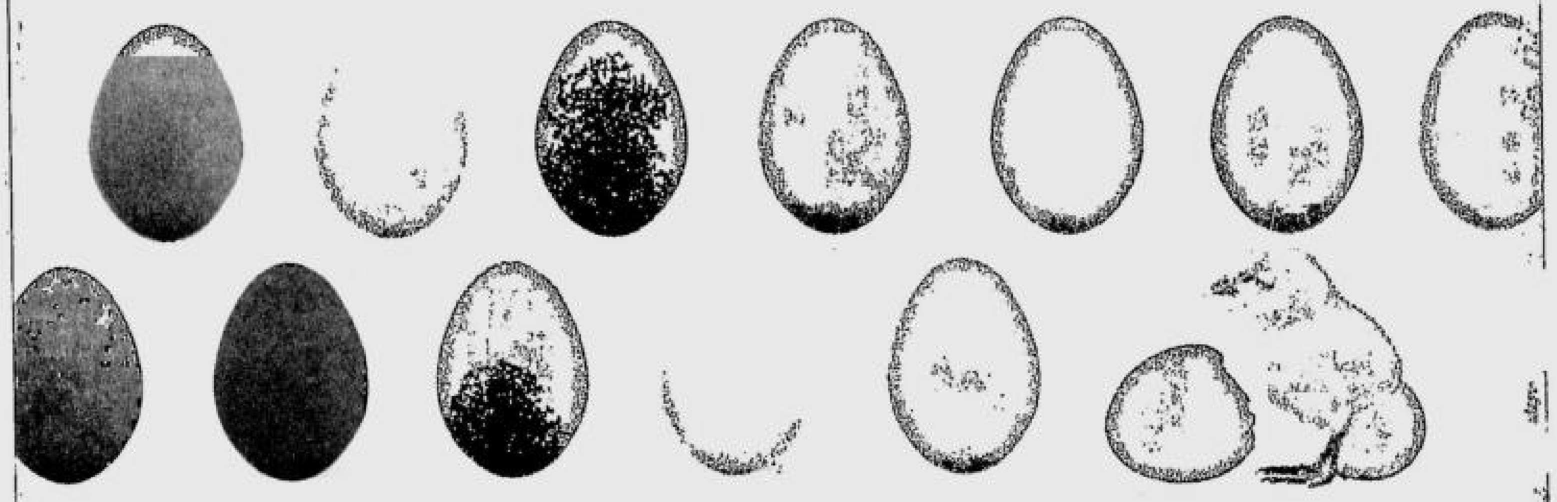
But he said the ousted president did not need to be confined in a hospital.

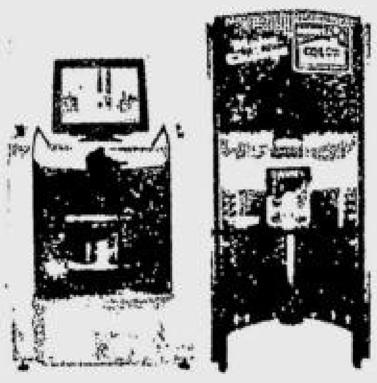
He said Estrada had recovered fully from the 2004 operation and although he may experience some discomfort, it was no reason for him not to make it to court, said Mow.

He suggested that Estrada be allowed to stand and stretch his knees from time to time while giving his testimony.

"Prolonged sitting may cause him some discomfort. It is only normal for anybody who has undergone knee surgery to feel that way," Mow said.

Mow, who arrived last Friday with another surgeon Jeremy Lo, spent the weekend in Tanay with Estrada. *Nelson F. Flores*





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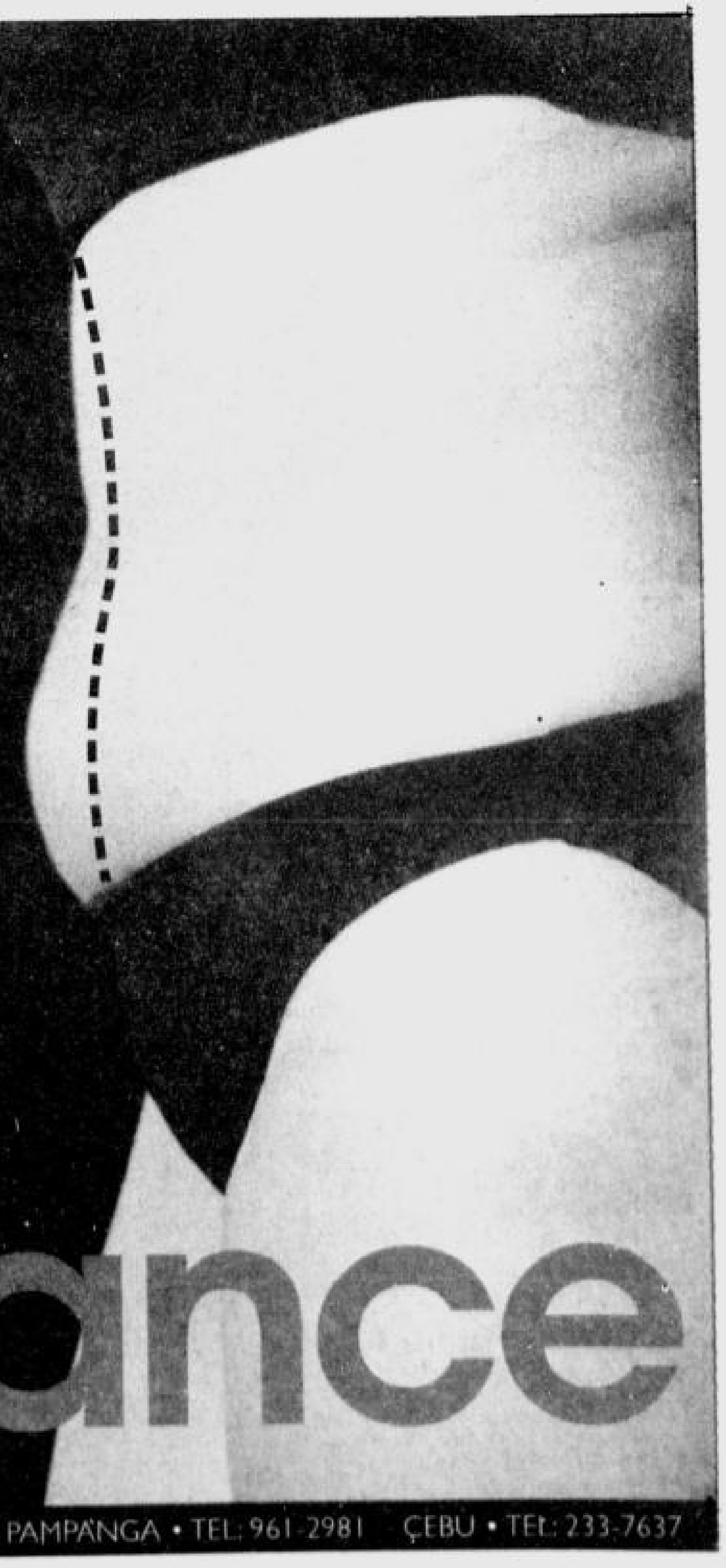
Ex-UP veep dies

DR. MARIA LUISA Canieso-Doronila, Ph D, a former vice president of the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City, passed away on Feb. 19 in Manucan, Zamboanga del Norte, at the age of 65.

She is survived by her husband lawyer Cirilo Doronila; children Philip Albert, Vincent Angelo, Cirilo Gregorio and Katerina; daughters-in-law Armina and Jonee; grandchildren Nathaniel Vincent, Cayenne Philip, Albert Sage, Jan Isaac and Azafran Cirilo; sisters Ma. Victoria, Ma. Theresa Atienza, Santas Jover, Angela and Petra, and brother-in-law Amando Doronila.

Her remains lie at the Church of the Risen Lord, UP Diliman. Services will be held every day after 6 p.m. until Feb. 25.

A Mass of the Resurrection will be held on Feb. 26 at 9 a.m. with cremation to follow at the Loyola Memorial Chapel in Marikina City.



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Left 'set stage' for Edsa I, insists Satur

By Michael Lim Ubac

SATUR OCAMPO HAS PROTESTED THE apparent exclusion of the contributions of the Left to People Power from most official accounts of the event, saying militant activists and progressive groups "toiled in the night to set the stage for that culminating act in 1986."

In a privilege speech late Monday, the senior party-list representative of Bayan Muna reminded colleagues that although the underground movement had boycotted the 1986 snap elections, the historic Edsa uprising was the "culmination, the peak of a long and arduous struggle of a great number of Filipinos" since the early 1970s.

Ocampo and his wife Carolina "Bobbie" Malay went underground at the height of the Marcos dictatorship. He was eventually arrested and imprisoned for 14 years. Ocampo became a member of the National Democratic Front panel in the peace talks with the government after he was pardoned by then President Corazon Aquino in 1986.

Ocampo lamented that in the so-called official and semi-official histories of the uprising and in this year's 20th anniversary commemoration, "there is sadly no mention of the invaluable contributions of the progressive people's movement whose adherents and leaders fought for the longest time and sacrificed the most in lives, long military detention and other violations of human rights."

Ocampo pointed out that official historians made no mention of these following pivotal events that he said led to Edsa 1:

- The First Quarter Storm that "rocked the foundations of the Marcos regime and the entire corrupt political system in 1970 and in the years preceding the declaration of martial law."
- The many young Filipinos who left kith and kin to serve the people and even offer their lives for freedom under martial law and the dictatorship.
- The tens of thousands of activists who were jailed without charges, killed, massacred or forcibly disappeared.
- The victims of massacres and butchery in the villages and during demonstrations in the cities.

"The silence over these important aspects of the anti-Marcos resistance speaks volumes about the official bias for the so-called big players of Edsa I and against those who had toiled in the night to set the stage for that culminating act in 1986," he said.

But perhaps the worst attitude towards People Power comes from Mrs. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, according to Ocampo.

"Ms Arroyo has become a pariah to People Power for many reasons the people already know: Lying, cheating, stealing, and suppressing the people's rights and freedoms. She has been a target of a movement that seeks to call on the people to remove her from office through another exercise of People Power. Could this be why she would not commemorate People Power and the fight against the dictatorship?"

He noted that several committees of the House and Senate had gathered evidence and testimonies pointing to the Arroyo administration as "accountable for the fast dissipation, misuse, if not plunder," of the P35 billion in ill-gotten wealth recovered from the Marcoses.

Ocampo pressed for the passage of House Bill No. 3315 to recognize the "heroes and martyrs who offered their lives in supreme sacrifice for justice, freedom and democracy."

The bill's passage "will be a humble acknowledgment coming from Congress that in fact owes its restoration mainly because of the Filipino people's action in 1986."

Prelate calls for reliving 'sacred memory'

ILOILO CITY—THE president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines has called on Filipinos to relive the "sacred memory" and principles of the first Edsa revolution as the country commemorates the 20th anniversary of the People Power revolt that toppled the dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Jaro Archbishop Angel Lagdameo said the people should continue aspiring for "good governance, characterized by justice, honesty, credibility, accountability and integrity."

"They should not stop until they get it," said Lagdameo in a statement.

Legacy

He urged the people who had gathered at Edsa to tell their stories of the event.

"To recall such stories is to be grateful, to be challenged once more not to sit on the laurels of its successes, but to relive the principles and values that were left behind as a lasting legacy," he said.

The bishops of Negros said the Edsa revolution was "unfinished business" that must be rekindled.

"There are still a lot of things to be done to attain the government we dreamed of 20 years ago," said Bishop John Du of Dumaguete City.

"We dreamed then and fought for a government that would truly work for the people, but human as we are, there is still a lot that must be done to fulfill that dream," said Du.

"Edsa is a beautiful memory," said Bacolod Bishop Vicente Navarra.

Rekindled

"But being a church of hope, we hope that the memory of Edsa where we showed our genuine love of country, our patriotism and love of people will be rekindled in every Filipino," he said.

Lagdameo said Filipinos failed to pursue the vision of the first Edsa and allow it to bear fruit, noting how corruption "started to creep in again."

But he said "something good has happened and is happening today," and urged the people to continue looking for good governance.

"The dry wood needs only a spark for it to become a conflagration. The agents of graft and corruption will be irrelevant once the spark of social transformation through moral values has become a fire that burns in the hearts of a critical mass of renewed Filipinos who will relentlessly pursue the spirit of Edsa I," he said.

Soon after assuming the top CBCP post last Dec. 1, Lagdameo launched a campaign for national transformation through individual conversion. *Nestor P. Burgos Jr., PDI Visayas Bureau, and Christian Esguerra, Metro Manila, with a report from Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

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PHILIPPINE EQUITY	Mostly Equities	Risk Taker	39.8%	20.2%	11.3%	87.1%
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Arrested lawyer kin of Quezon City mayor

By Luige A. del Puerto

CALL IT DÉJÀ VU.

The second man arrested with 1Lt. Lawrence San Juan yesterday morning in Padre Garcia town in Batangas was in a similar situation nearly a decade ago.

Jose Christopher Belmonte was in a car carrying the rebel leader Nilo de la Cruz when the latter was arrested in Marilao, Bulacan, in October 1997. Authorities said Belmonte was De la Cruz's "driver and bodyguard."

Belmonte, a nephew of Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, was wounded in the chest during an alleged fire fight then between his group and pursuing government agents in Marilao.

His captors brought him to a military hospital in Metro Manila for treatment.

Yesterday, Belmonte found himself in the same vehicle ferrying San Juan, a key officer of the Magdalo group, and a certain Albert Guyal.

Policemen and soldiers stopped their car at a checkpoint in Barangay San Felipe in Padre Garcia.

Just like nine years ago, they were apparently fleeing from government troops.

Peaceful surrender

This time around, however, there was no fire fight. The group surrendered peacefully, the police said.

"Guyal claims to be a poultry farm boy. He is from Puerto Princesa (City)," said Director General Arturo Lomibao, chief of the Philippine National Police.

But the police have found "inconsistencies" in Guyal's statements during tactical interrogation, according to Lomibao.

The PNP chief did not elaborate.

"Belmonte is a lawyer ... He has a background in the leftist movement," the police chief said, referring to the 1997 arrest.

In fact, one of those who arrested Belmonte in Bulacan was now the head of the Armed Forces Southern Luzon Command, Lt. General Pedro Cabuay, according to Lomibao.

The Southern Luzon Command covers the provinces of Quezon, Rizal, Laguna, Mindoro, Palawan, Romblon and Batangas.

Cabuay was then chief of the Intelligence Service Group of the Philippine Army.

Son of mining exec

Belmonte, according to INQUIRER reports on the 1997 arrest, is a son of mining executive Dennis Belmonte.

He was a student leader at the University of the Philippines, where he studied law and business administration, the INQUIRER reports said.

In 1983 when former Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr. was assassinated, the young Belmonte was an officer of the student council of the then UP College of Arts and Sciences.

He was also a fraternity man, belonging to Alpha Sigma, a group which produced leftist leaders in the past, including alleged members of the central committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

Lying low

In 1997, the INQUIRER quoted his fraternity brothers as saying that Belmonte had "been lying low" and had even settled down years before his arrest.

Famous Alpha Sigmans include Sen. Gregorio Honasan, former Public Works Undersecretary Mabini Pablo and now Malacañang Chief of Staff Michael Defensor.

Two other fraternity members, UP Collegian editor Antonio Tagamolila and student leader William Begg, had joined the New People's Army in the early 1970s. Both men were later killed in separate encounters with the military.

Fugitive Magdalo seized inside NPA lair

From page A1

point ahead of a raid they were going to conduct on a mango farm in Barangay Bucal in Padre Garcia town, some 80 km south of Manila, at around 5 a.m. The farm is about 6 km from the checkpoint in Barangay San Felipe.

Two-week intelligence work

Director General Arturo Lomibao, Philippine National Police chief, said the raid was the result of a weeklong intelligence gathering by a composite team from the military and police.

He said "a top-level meeting" between officials of the central committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the Magdalo was supposed to be held on the farm.

But Tumanda, commander of the 740th Combat Wing, said his unit did not know that the meeting was between the Magdalo and the communist insurgents and that San Juan would be present at the meeting.

All his team knew, he said, was the conference would be held by the CPP.

Escape by motorcycle

As soon as the government troops entered the farm, the people in the compound scampered and escaped toward the mountains at the Batangas-Quezon boundary.

Tumanda said not a single shot was fired during the raid. "But during a pursuit operation a few minutes later, the fleeing rebels started to fire at us. It lasted for just a few minutes," he said.

He said he also heard the sound of a vehicle leaving the farm.

Tumanda said he later learned that two men escaped from the area on a motorcycle. It was possible that San Juan was one of the men and later transferred to the van, he said.

Montenegro said San Juan and his companions did not resist arrest when they were flagged down.

Confiscated from them were a Magdalo flag and personal effects.

Haggard, handcuffed

At around noon, a haggard-looking San Juan was escorted by armed military personnel out of a room where he was held after his arrest. His hands were cuffed behind his back.

Wearing a checkered long-sleeved shirt over a white shirt and denim pants, San Juan was taken to a waiting van and later to a helicopter. He was flown to Fort Bonifacio.

Before the helicopter took off, San Juan issued a short statement to reporters.

"Our situation today reflects the true state of Filipinos. The fight continues!" he said as his escorts pushed his head down.

Padilla said San Juan was with two commanders of the New People's Army (NPA), the armed wing of the CPP, identified as Leo Velasco and Tirso Alcantara.

"The 740th Combat Group was targeting the two NPA leaders but the ISG (Intelligence Service Group) was able to pinpoint that San Juan was going to meet with them," Padilla said.

However, Velasco and Alcantara eluded arrest, Padilla said.

Some two hours after the raid, two other men in two separate vehicles were arrested at a checkpoint near Lipa City, also in Batangas. The police suspected that they too had come from the farm.

Two regions

Director Rey Varilla, PNP-Intelligence Group chief, said the two-week surveillance that led to the arrest of San Juan covered at least two regions.

It was no accident that the police and military had virtually saturated Batangas with checkpoints.

Earlier, the police received information "from a mole" that top officers of the CPP-NPA were going to meet with Magdalo officers on a farm in Padre Garcia at dawn.

It appeared the group got wind of the police operation a few minutes before government troops stormed the farm.

The arrest of San Juan confirmed earlier reports of the "unholy alliance" between renegade Magdalo soldiers and the communist rebels, said Lt. Gen. Pedro Cabuay, commander of the Philippine Army's Southern Luzon Command.

"This is an unholy alliance between two groups with opposing ideologies who want to topple [the] government," Cabuay said at a news briefing at Camp Miguel Malvar.

INQUIRER sources from the local unit of the NPA in the province confirmed that a meeting with San Juan and the communist leaders had indeed taken place.

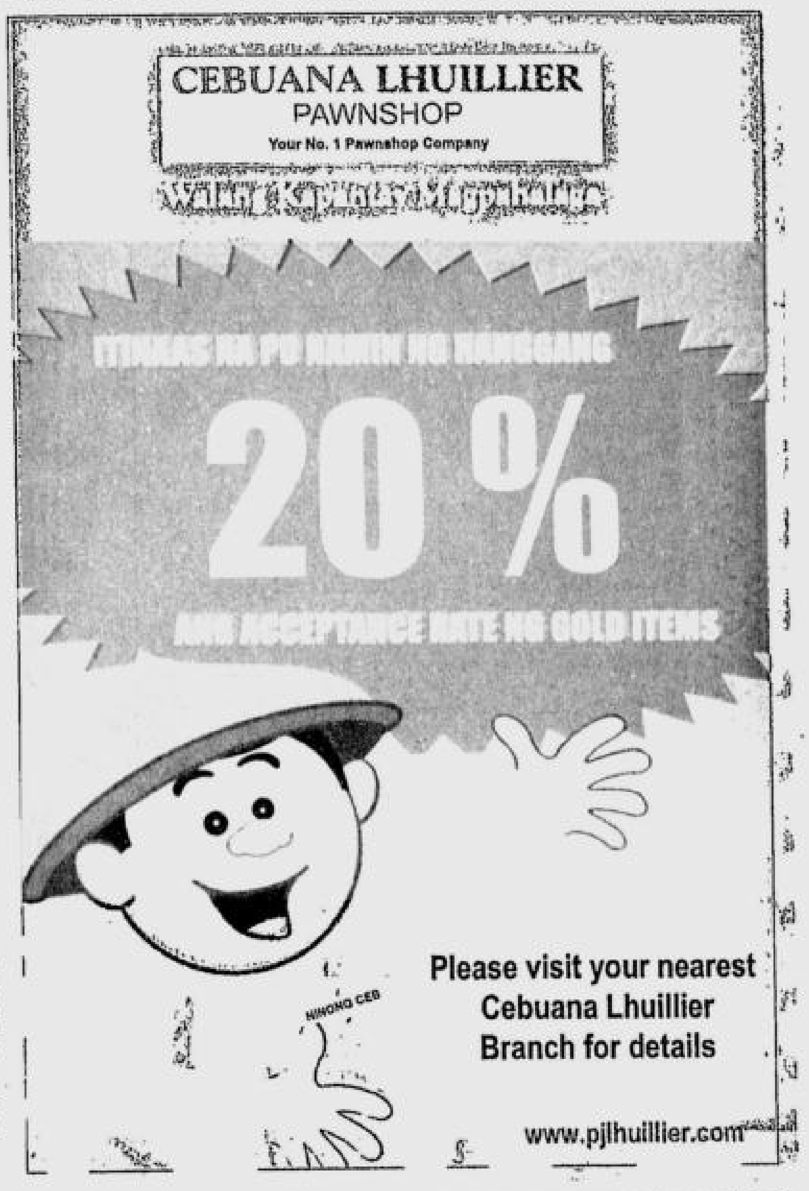
At the news conference, authorities presented several documents they recovered from the farm.

Among the items were communist documents and lists of successful tactical offensives of the NPA in Southern Tagalog. Also recovered were dozens of bullets for M-16 rifles and lists of military units in Batangas and nearby provinces.

Religious meeting

Residents said the "top-level meeting" in Padre Garcia between San Juan and CPP leaders was supposed to be a religious gathering of Iglesia ni Kristo members.

The farm is owned by businessman Tumandatino Matala. *With a report from Dona Pazzibugan*



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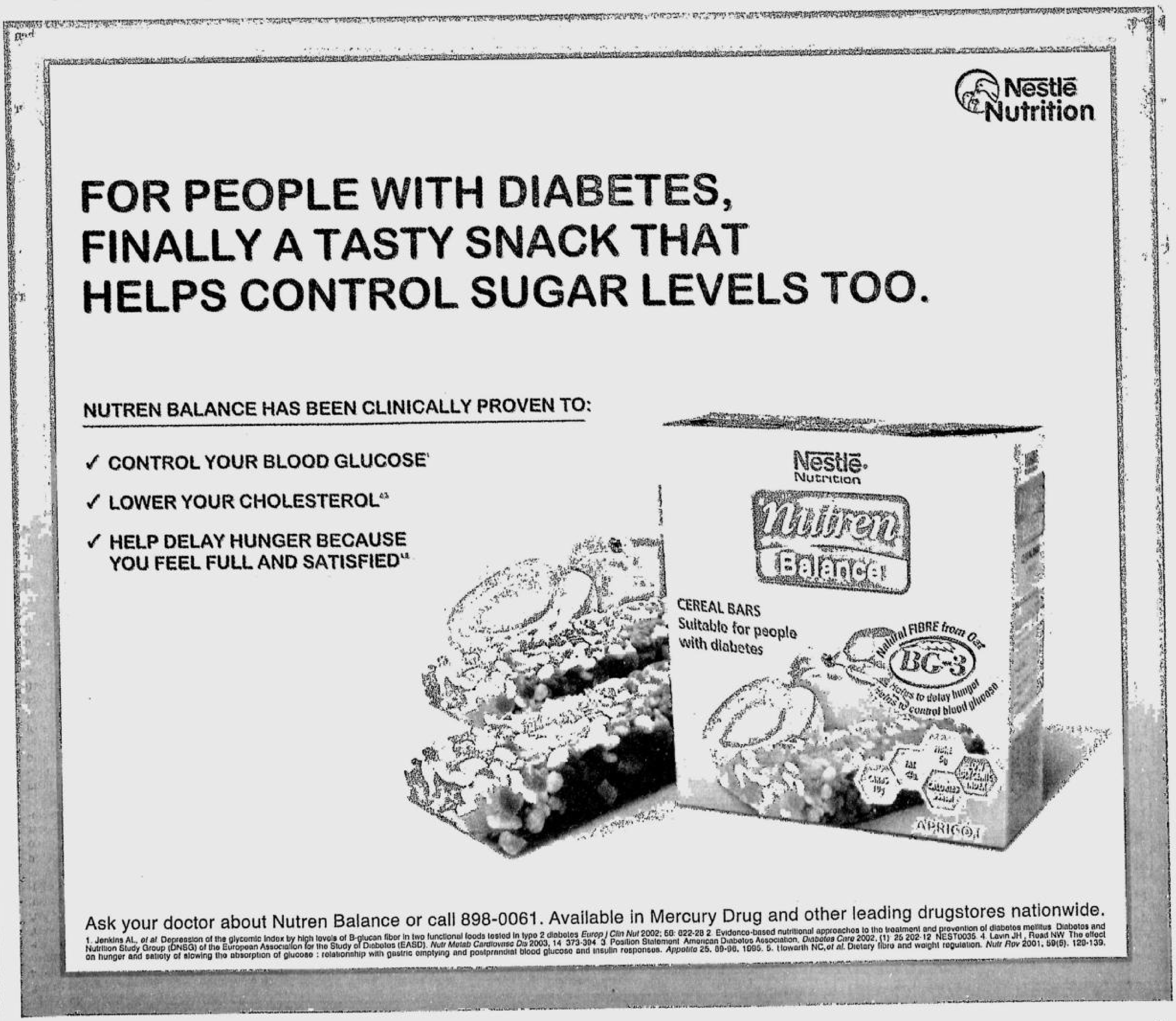

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PHILIPPINE ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS

45th Annual Convention

February 23-25, 2006 • Philippine International Convention Center

"Quality Health Care: The Family Physician's Perspective"

MESSAGES

My warmest felicitations to the officers and members of the Philippine Academy of Family Physicians, Inc. on your 45th Anniversary and Annual Convention.

Your theme, "Quality Care: the Family Physician's Perspective," reflects your commitment to provide the best possible healthcare for the Filipino family. As family physicians, your efforts to upgrade your competencies and to excel in your chosen field are vital to our quest for better health for our growing population. In your position, you are better able to give families under your care the best medical service.

I trust that this event will contribute to the advancement of the medical profession and to better healthcare in our communities, consistent with our mission of a productive life for every one of our countrymen.

More power and *Mabuhay!*

(Sgd.) H.E. GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President, Republic of the Philippines

I convey my warmest greetings to the officers and members of the Philippine Academy of Family Physicians (PAFP) as they celebrate their 45th Anniversary and Annual Convention with the theme "Quality Health Care: The Family Physician's Perspective".

The Department of Health recognizes your essential contributions in line with the government's efforts in providing quality, affordable and accessible health care to all. As health care providers, we must continue to work for the continuing improvement of our health system.

By collective action, we can provide meaningful developments and move our country towards better health and greater progress.

I wish you more success in all your endeavors as you mark another high point in your history of productive service to the public.

Congratulations and *mabuhay kayong lahat!*

(Sgd.) FRANCISCO T. DUQUE III, MD, MSc
Secretary of Health

My warmest greetings to the officers and members of the Philippine Academy of Family Physicians, Inc. on your 45th Anniversary and Annual Convention on February 23-25, 2006 with the theme, "Quality Health Care: The Family Physician's Perspective".

Your organization's meaningful existence for more than four decades truly calls for a grand celebration. It is noteworthy that on top of your accomplishment in the past forty five years, you remain dedicated in upgrading the expertise of your members. Such commitment is paramount as you carry on with the task to promote a better state of health for every family, the basic foundation of our society.

It is a source of pride and comfort to have the Philippine Academy of Family Physicians as our active partner in our common pursuit for a more healthy and productive citizenry, which is the cornerstone in our journey towards development. I fervently hope that you be unwavering in your noble undertakings as we in the city government of Manila continue to streamline the delivery of basic health services to our people in line with our accelerating urban renewal and development program.

We look forward to the successful fruition of this milestone event!

Tuloy-tuloy and programa "Buhayin ang Maynila!".
Buháy na Maynila, Buhay ng Bansa!

(Sgd.) JOSE L. ATIENZA JR.
Mayor, City of Manila

Warmest greetings from the Philippine Medical Association (PMA).

Congratulations to the Officers and Members of the Philippine Academy of Family Physicians on the occasion of its 45th Anniversary and Annual Convention.

Our constitution mandates that every Filipino should be provided with quality health care. The convention theme "Quality Health Care: The Family Physician's Perspective" is therefore very much in line with the health objective of our constitution. We commend the Philippine Academy of Family Physicians for its various continuing medical education programs that made the big difference in the competency and skills of our family physicians. After all, they are the ones who usually have the first encounter with patients.

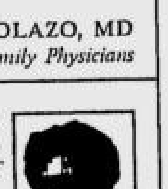
PMA joins you on this momentous occasion and wishes that you have a very productive and successful convention.

(Sgd.) MODESTO O. LLAMAS, MD
President, Philippine Medical Association

As President of the Philippine Academy of Family Physicians, I am deeply honored to welcome all the participants to its 45th Anniversary and Annual Convention with the theme "Quality Health Care: The Family Physician's Perspective." More than any other specialty, Family Medicine's concern for sustained quality assurance is paramount because of the broad scope of care covered by the specialty. To answer this concern, the organizing committee has left no stone unturned in assuring that all relevant issues and developments are tackled in the convention. While the affair is mainly an academic one, it also provides an opportunity to meet new friends and renew the ties with old ones.

Again, Welcome and Mabuhay!

(Sgd.) REYNALDO A. OLAZO, MD
President, Philippine Academy of Family Physicians



This year's convention underscores the importance of the Academy's contribution to national progress as it has been in the forefront of the healthcare system.

With the theme - "Quality Healthcare: The Family Physician's Perspective", we are challenged to constantly seek, to enhance and to maximize awareness and a sense of responsibility in meeting the health needs of the less fortunate Filipino family, taking into account the high cost of medicines and expensive technology. To achieve our goal towards this end in the sphere of our profession, there must be selfless-dedication and sincere commitment nurtured with compassion in providing the much needed quality healthcare especially to the impoverished segment of our society to help them achieve a better quality of life.

Let us forge a stronger Academy in our role as providers of medical and healthcare services.

Welcome and Mabuhay!

(Sgd.) SORAYA P. ABUBAKAR, MD
Vice President, PAFP and Over-all Chair, Organizing Committee

Day One • February 23, 2006

- Formal Opening Recognition and Conferment Ceremonies
- Industry-sponsored Luncheon Symposia
  - Allergic rhinitis
  - Complementary and alternative treatment to menopausal symptoms
  - Beyond LDL reduction: new perspective in lipid management
  - The IDEAL opportunity: evolving standardsof care in secondary prevention
  - The role of allergy in asthma - is it significant?
  - Are you on the rise?
  - Pleotropic effect of statins (Beyond cholesterol lowering)
  - A bright and beautiful mind: effects of iron on cognitive development
  - Changing considerations in the treatment of hypertension-focus on ARBs
- Annual Business Meeting
- Fellowship Night

Day Two • February 24, 2006

- General Elections
- Simultaneous Scientific Sessions (Choosing the Appropriate Diagnostic Tests)
  - Cardiac chest pain
  - Lower GI bleeding
  - Joint pains
  - Goiter
  - Bleeding disorders
  - Dementia
  - Hematuria
  - Chronic cough
  - Convulsions
- Clinicopathologic Conference Grand Finals
- Simultaneous Scientific Sessions (Pharmacotherapeutics)
  - Anti-arrhythmic drugs
  - Hepatogogues
  - Analgesics
  - Anti-thyroid drugs
  - Anti-depressants
  - Drugs used in the prevention of urolithiasis
  - Anti-asthmatic drugs
  - Anti-epileptic drugs
- Industry-sponsored Luncheon Symposia
  - ASCOT BPLA: Imperatives in clinical practice
  - A touch of KLAZ in pediatric RTI
  - Post-marketing surveillance of gabapentin in Filipino patients' neuropathic pain
  - Insulin resistance and the metabolic syndrome: strategies for overcoming the challenge
  - NASH: Why is it so scary?
  - The role of once-a-day cephalosporin in an outpatient therapy
  - A clinical approach to leukorrhea: an interactive session
  - Musculoskeletal vignettes in clinical practice
  - Pharmacologic management in type II diabetes
  - Olmesartan: the power to achieve goal blood pressure
- Simultaneous Scientific Sessions
  - Hypertension guidelines
  - Hepatitis updates
  - Low back pain/myofascial pain
  - Type II diabetes mellitus
  - Anemia
  - Alzheimer's disease
  - Urinary tract infection
  - Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
  - Primary care approach to dog bites
- Oath Taking of New Members
- Annual Residents' Night

Day Three • February 25, 2006

- Fitness Clinic
- Simultaneous Scientific Sessions
  - Mentoring/teaching
  - Nutritional deficiencies
  - Disaster management (triaging)
  - Jaundice
  - Heavy metal poisoning
  - Emerging diseases among travellers
  - Fever of unknown origin
  - Quality of voice: dysphonia, hoarseness, breathiness
  - Process analysis
  - Pre-natal screening
  - Teaching community concepts
  - Micronutrient supplementation
  - The "E" critical care updates for 2005
  - Medical and surgical management of cholelithiasis
  - Antidotes in heavy metal poisoning
  - Travel medicine (Prophylaxis/Immunization)
  - Anti-malarial drugs
  - Voice therapy
  - Marketing your practice
  - Hormonal replacement therapy in dysfunctional uterine bleeding
- Industry-sponsored Luncheon Symposia
  - Natural family planning and standard days method
  - Pharmacoeconomic solutions for breathing difficulties
  - Engaging the practitioners in tuberculosis control
- Simultaneous Scientific Sessions
  - The PRISM project
  - Evidence-based hormonal contraceptives
  - CPG on dyslipidemia
  - Dyslipidemic diet
  - BLS/ACLS Updates (Workshop)
  - Menopause
  - Pre-operative evaluation (CP clearance)
  - CPG on Poisoning
  - Medical tourism
  - Typhoid fever
  - Acute tonsillopharyngitis
  - Image enhancement for doctors' personality improvement
- Environmental Protection Project Presentation
- Closing & Induction Ceremonies

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Awards
Winnie P. Siao, MD

Close to 4,000 family practitioners are expected to attend the 45th Annual Convention of the Philippine Academy of Family Physicians. Advanced registration figure has reached the 2,500 mark and organizers expect some more before the start of this three-day gathering of Family Medicine specialists. Convention activities will run from February 23 to 25 at the Philippine International Convention Center.

Focusing on the theme - *Quality Health Care: The Family Physician's Perspective*, the convention gathers more than 50 authorities on various medical topics. At any one time, up to ten sessions will run simultaneously, to enable attendees to select topics of special interest to them.

Highlights

Aside from the well-planned scientific program, organizers also consider the fellowship night and exhibits as potential crowd-drawers. The annual business meeting shall take place on February 23, Meeting Room 4, PICC. The general election is set on the following day, February 24.

Awardees

LEOPANDO

Dr. Zorayda E. Leopando, PAFP President from 1994 to 1996 and presently Vice Chancellor for Planning & Development of UP Manila shall go down in PAFP history as the first Ramon R. Angeles Memorial Lecturer. She will keynote the convention's opening program.

Also sharing the limelight are Dr. Isabelita M. Samaniego (Family Physician of the Year), Dr. Josefina Isidro-Lapeña (Most Outstanding Family Physician in Community Service), Dr. Edwina Desiderio-Cabato, President of Zamboanga City Chapter (Leadership Awardee), Dr. Maria Dolores Capati-Lapuz of Pampanga Chapter (Most Active Chapter Secretary) and Dr. Teresita Yap Dy of Cebu Chapter (Most Active Chapter Treasurer/Antonia Dujunco Memorial Awardee).

Pampanga Chapter shall be cited as the year's most outstanding chapter and most active chapter in CME. Zamboanga City Chapter is once again the most active chapter in community service.

SAMANIEGO

LAPENA

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DY

Inductees

This year, PAFP is also set to add the names of 20 family practitioners to its roster of fellows, and induct 40 new diplomates (DFM) and 110 certified family physicians.

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GMA: I'm best person to lead RP

From page A1

"coups and sham people power" in a parliamentary government, and as Charter change gets under way, she would continue to focus on the economy and implement her reforms, she said.

"And let me also make clear: I believe I am the best person to lead this nation through this transition," she said.

But at an earlier forum, former Vice President Teofisto Guingona warned of "guerrilla warfare" from groups "being pushed to the limits" by Ms Arroyo's continued stay in office.

Guingona said the guerrilla warfare would be similar to the struggle against martial law, and even to the Filipino resistance to the Japanese occupation during World War II.

"[The authorities] will have the momentum at the beginning, but the resistance will continue," Guingona said. "That will be tantamount to civil war, and we don't like that. It's not the right solution."

Honoring Edsa I

Ms Arroyo, who is being criticized for choosing to mark the 20th anniversary of Edsa I with a low-key commemoration, said Filipinos should "honor the struggle of Edsa by continuing to reform our political system," among other things.

"The world embraced Edsa I in 1986. The world tolerated Edsa II in 2001," she said in a speech at the Focap forum at the Dusit Hotel in Makati City.

"The world will not forgive an Edsa III but instead will condemn the Philippines as a country whose political system is hopelessly unstable, and the Filipinos as among the finest people in the world but who manage to shoot themselves in the foot," the President said.

She warned that under an Edsa III, the country would neither be able to court investments from abroad nor bring social justice to the people.

'Nothing'

Asked what it would take her to resign, Ms Arroyo said: "Nothing."

"If I remember right, President [Corazon] Aquino had her share of [resignation] calls, and there were bloody coup [attempts during her term], but she did not resign," Ms Arroyo said of her former ally, who has also called on her to step down.

She added: "I have a mandate from the people. I have been proclaimed. The Supreme Court has not overturned my proclamation, and so therefore I have a term until 2010 and I intend to serve out that term."

Ms Arroyo also said she was elected to make difficult decisions, and had indeed made them.

"Not without mistakes on my part and certainly without significant criticism," she said, adding:

"But I have the experience of hindsight and I aim to fulfill my term with a steady hand on the helm."

Palace officials had earlier said that should the Charter change process call for the President to cut her term short if parliamentary elections were held in 2007, she would comply.

But when asked yesterday to comment on the matter, Ms Arroyo said: "I don't think Charter change would result in that."

The sooner, the better

The President said she hoped the country would have a new Constitution and a new system of government soon.

"The sooner this happens, the sooner we would be able to move the country forward," she said.

She also said reforming the "poisoned political system" was one of two measures that would address the continuing rifts in society.

"The divisiveness in our country that came about with the two Edsas has not yet been solved," she said, adding that this was why the country continued to have "rogue elements."

According to Ms Arroyo, the government needs to provide the people with services they deserve "because poverty is the most important recruitment ground for any destabilization."

"It is not the coups that we are concerned about. What we should address are the destabilizers," she said.

Ms Arroyo said the rogue elements would not succeed, and reiterated her "great faith and trust in the loyalty" of the military and the police.

She cited the arrest yesterday of the fugitive mutineer Lt. Lawrence San Juan at a checkpoint in Batangas. *(Story on Page A1.)*

Bully in schoolyard

Asked what she had been doing to unite the forces of the two Edsas, the President said she had called for unity "many times before."

"And I am still open to unity for those who are willing to accept an invitation," she said. "But really, I have stopped chasing the bully around the schoolyard, and I am working for fundamental political reforms so that divisive elements in our system will be a thing of the past."

Asked if the bully she had stopped chasing was a reference to former President Aquino, Ms Arroyo replied curtly: "I don't want to speak about personalities. One of the things that we must reform in our system is, we must have a new politics of policies rather than personalities."

In her speech, the President vowed to pursue political reform to ensure "greater stability" and to "diminish the political effect on the Philippine economy."

"Political maneuvering has become our most active industry," she lamented, citing "people who parlayed their presence in Edsa a long time ago into a lifetime franchise of working against governments whose leaders do not curtsy before them."

Civil disobedience

Guingona, who served as Ms Arroyo's vice president from 2001 to 2004, spoke on Monday night at the forum "What's Next...?" sponsored by the Concerned Men for a Better Philippines at the Manila Polo Club in Makati City.

He said the Arroyo administration's plans to shift to the parliamentary system and its proposed antiterrorism bill were fueling public agitation.

If these are pushed through, "the challenge will no longer be peaceful ... but of guerrilla warfare in the days to come," he said.

Guingona said "civil disobedience" was another option being studied.

He said civil disobedience could be expressed through the nonpayment of taxes or withdrawal of support from the government by the bureaucracy, and even by students going on a weeklong vacation with the consent of their parents and their school administrations.

Muslims' support

At the open forum, Nikki Hayudeni, secretary general of the Muslim organization Assalam, said his group would back civil disobedience in Mindanao.

"We will lead in the nonpayment of taxes in the Muslim areas in Mindanao," Hayudeni said.

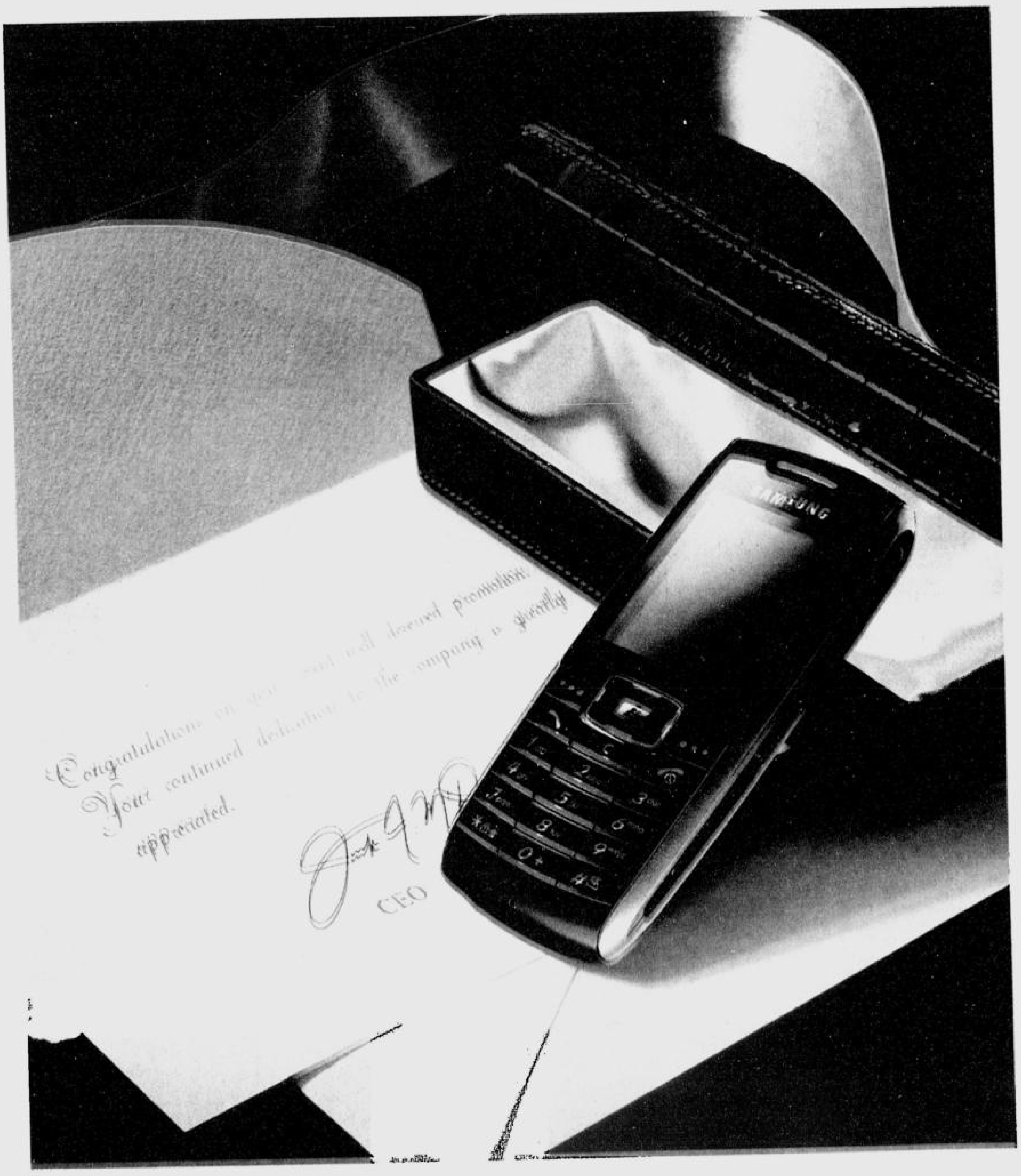
Stickers calling for civil disobedience were distributed to those who attended the forum.

The stickers bore the pictures of San Juan and other escaped mutineers—Capt. Nathaniel Rabonza and 1st Lieutenants Patricio Bumidang and Sonny Sarmiento.

The mutineers have also called for civil disobedience to bring down the Arroyo administration. *With a report from Fe Zamora*

PRESIDENT Arroyo explains to the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines that in her desire to put economic reforms in place, she has had to make a number of unpopular decisions.

MALACAÑANG PHOTO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PBSP's 35 Years of Leadership in Corporate Social Responsibility & 18 Years of Pioneering Social Development Work in the Visayas

Braving new fronts towards productivity and self-reliance

THE POLITICAL TURMOIL AND economic uncertainty of the 1970s were the impetus for 50 business leaders to consolidate their efforts in empowering the poor and uplifting the Philippine society. With the growing number of companies committing themselves to social development, the basic idea that business' sole purpose is the creation of wealth is significantly revolutionized. This expression of collective corporate activism is the Philippine Business for Social Progress or PBSP.

PBSP's beginnings were met with numerous failures and disappointments that challenged its perseverance. But with the unrelenting support of its member companies, the Foundation has manifested its role as a partner in nation building by implementing poverty reduction programs and developing self-reliant communities.

For the past 35 years, it has raised and disbursed P5.8 billion for more than 5,600 social development projects that have benefited 3.27 million Filipino households — urban poor communities, marginal fisherfolk, upland and lowland farmers, agrarian reform beneficiaries, and indigenous peoples. To this day, the fusion of business discipline and the heart for the underprivileged has made PBSP a benchmark for social development and corporate social responsibility here in the Philippines and abroad.

PBSP in the Visayas

PBSP's poverty reduction efforts in the Visayas accelerated in 1988 with the establishment of the Visayas Regional Office in Cebu City. Its first program was the Hillyland Development Program (HDP), which began as a partnership between PBSP, the Cebu City government and the business sector. The Central Cebu watersheds, or the hillylands, is home to many of Cebu's poor households. The farming communities had very low income due to lack of new farming technologies, degradation of the environment, and very low productivity.

Equipped with livelihood improvement and environmental rehabilitation, the HDP became a trademark for PBSP's future poverty reduction programs and a model for direct business sector involvement in social development. Hillyland communities were organized into cooperatives and peoples organizations, and leading-edge farming technologies were taught to the farmers. Meanwhile, employee volunteers and businesspersons provided medical services and capability building support. They also participated in reforesting of 3,696 hectares in the Hillylands to help continuous flow of water in Metro Cebu.

At present, PBSP manages five poverty reduction programs in Bohol, Cebu and Samar. Collectively, these programs have improved the lives of 23,913 households. Other forms of social development assistance include: livelihood improvement, capability building, holistic engagement of various stakeholders, and provision of basic services such as health and education.

Poverty reduction programs

In Metro Cebu, PBSP has gained ground with its workforce and education programs. Answering the demand for more job opportunities for retrenched and displaced but skilled urban workers, PBSP strengthened 10 people's cooperatives that employ 8,250 individuals. And to address the mismatch between the needs of the industry and the quality of graduates, PBSP formed the Coalition for Better Education to improve the education curriculum, and assisted two Science and Technology Education Centers, which are specialized high schools that produce employable graduates.

In Cebu Hillylands, PBSP sustains the gains reaped in the earlier HDP by reaching out to other barangays, introducing solid waste management, developing alternative livelihood projects, and widening the stretch of denuded lands that are to be reforested.

In Olango Island, Cebu and Maqueda Bay, Samar, poverty incidences are high because illegal fishing activities have severely depleted the coastal and marine resources, which are primarily the people's source of livelihood. There are efforts to save Olango through the reforestation of mangrove sites, formation of coastal resource management councils, engagement in alternative livelihood activities such as seaweeds farming and eco-tourism, provision of basic services like water, medicines and toilets, and introduction of family health care courses. While in Samar, PBSP built the Coastal and Marine Technology Testing and Verification Center to teach and provide fisherfolk and farmers alternative livelihoods, such as nurturing high-value fish species to augment their income.

Finally, in Bohol, the efforts to transform rice farmers to farmer entrepreneurs have expanded to eight new barangays in the northern part of the province, an addition to 22 assisted barangays.

Promoting MSEs

Cognizant of the significant role played by the micro and small enterprises (MSEs) in the local economy, the Corporate Volunteers for Enterprise Development (CVED) program is catching up in Bohol and Cebu. CVED facilitates the matching of MSEs in need of advisory services with experts who are either businessmen or professionals, employed or retired. The arrangement can be likened to hiring a business consultant to solve specific problems in certain areas of the business. But in CVED's case, these experts provide their time and expertise to MSEs for free.

Capitalizing on the business sector's social responsibility

PBSP currently has 211 member companies nationwide, 35 of which are from the Visayas. And this month, eight more companies joined increasing the region's total membership to 43. To further capitalize and encourage the Visayas business to intensify its poverty reduction efforts, the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were introduced to its local business leaders in November 2005. It was the first Business and the MDGs forum outside Metro Manila and they have formed their own four Business and the MDGs clusters for poverty reduction, education, health and the environment. It is their immediate response to participate in this global challenge of eradicating poverty and worst forms of human deprivation by 2015.

Way forward

In the succeeding years, PBSP Visayas will be, more than ever, relentless in mainstreaming its twin thrusts of poverty reduction and leadership in corporate social responsibility. Socially responsible Visayas business will translate to more classrooms and learning resource centers built, more sustainable jobs generated, stronger self-sustaining agricultural and fishing communities, and preserved upland, urban and marine ecosystems. The 35-year legacy of the Foundation's corporate social responsibility will continue to provide inspiration as PBSP braves many fronts in the pursuit of its social development goals. Moreover, the wisdom of 18 years of pioneering social development work in the Visayas shall harness more communities in their way towards greater productivity and self-reliance.

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FY 2005-2006

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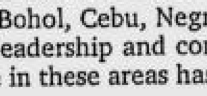

Greetings to the Visayas Executive Committee, member companies, management and staff of the Philippine Business for Social Progress on the occasion of its 18th Visayas Annual Membership Meeting with the theme, *"PBSP Visayas at 18: Leading Corporate Citizenship,"* on the heels of its 35th year.

I also extend my warmest regard and appreciation for PBSP's solid reputation in Corporate Social Responsibility, which has significantly contributed in easing poverty in the country.

In the Visayas, PBSP has remained true to its mission of reducing poverty through the creation of self-reliant communities in the provinces of Bohol, Cebu, Negros and Samar. Through its leadership and commitment, the quality of life in these areas has markedly improved.

We in the Government acknowledge that we cannot fight poverty alone. We need strong allies, like the PBSP, who have been resilient in bringing about meaningful change for the Filipinos. The PBSP's programs on sustainable livelihood opportunities, protection of the environment, accessibility of responsive education for the children and the youth, and the availability of basic social services have inspired much optimism and hope in the regions it is present.

With the directions set under the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Philippine Government and the business sector are one with the rest of the world in reducing poverty and eliminating the worst of human deprivation by 2015. I am grateful that the PBSP continues to accompany us in these ventures.

Together, let us continue building a progressive Philippine society that we may look forward to a better tomorrow for our people.

Mabuhay kayong lahat!

Gloria Arroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines

Ensuring the continuous flow of water for Metro Cebu

A WATERSHED IS A NATURAL land formation consisting of mountain ranges, forestlands, lowlands and coastal areas that catch rainwater essential for household and industrial use. The 34,165-hectare Central Cebu Protected Landscape, site of PBSP's Cebu Watershed Management Program, is the source of Metro Cebu's water supply, thus its protection and conservation is essential in realizing Metro Cebu's long-term development goals.

Ideally, 54 percent of the whole watershed should be forested to ensure continuous flow of water to support the growing population. At present, less than 10 percent of the Central Cebu watersheds are forested due to generations of unregulated cutting down of trees. PBSP's partnerships with the business sector, government, donor agencies and peoples organizations resulted to the reforestation of 3,696 hectares in Central Cebu's watersheds.

The funds contributed by the corporate sponsors of PBSP's 18th Visayas Annual Membership Meeting will reforest 15.5 hectares of denuded land. The 38,750 trees that will be planted will help ensure a brighter future for Metro Cebu.

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Senga: Coup odds 'very low'

By TJ Burgonio and Norman Bordadora

GEN. GENEROSO SENGA, CHIEF OF STAFF of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, yesterday squelched speculations that a coup d'etat was in the offing after explosions rocked Malacañang's grounds and a street in Makati City on Monday.

"It's very low, your honor," Senga said when asked by Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile about the probability of a coup during his confirmation hearing before the Commission on Appointments at the Senate.

He said he believed the Presidential Security Group's report that the explosion at Malacañang was caused by combustible material thrown in a garbage can that was "probably ignited by a cigarette."

"It appears to be the case," he said.

The blast occurred in front of the Radio and Television Malacañang (RTVM) office at around noon.

An hour later, an explosives-laden ping pong ball exploded in a vacant lot at the corner of M. Reyes and Jerry Streets in Barangay Pio del Pilar in Makati City, injuring a girl.

Members of the opposition in the House of Representatives expressed serious doubts about Malacañang's claim that paint thinner had caused the explosion.

Breach of security

House Minority Leader Francis Escudero said Malacañang should look into the serious breach of security when President Macapagal-Arroyo herself was inside the Palace.

"Even the tons of garbage in Payatas (a dump in Quezon City) don't explode that way. How come it would inside Malacañang?" Escudero said in an interview, dismissing the other theory of "chemical combustion."

Cavite Rep. Gilbert Remulla, another member of the House minority, said that whether it was a bomb or paint thinner that caused the explosion it was a breach of security.

"It's a slap on the faces of the [members of the] PSG either way," Remulla said.

After listening to Senga, Enrile said he was surprised that in the history of military violence, this was the only time a coup d'etat was being "announced," instead of being kept under wraps under the "Mafia principle of omerta."

"You do not talk about it, otherwise you will be shot by your captors. But here in this country, people are talking about coup d'etat and the media bite. They announce it on the radio," the former defense minister commented.

"It's funny. It's like a joke to announce a coup d'etat over the radio."

Threat reduced

After the hearing, Senga, whose promotion to the rank of four-star general was recommended by the CA committee on defense to today's plenary session, said it was unfortunate that some groups were fanning the coup rumors.

"There are several groups that are trying to destabilize [the government]. What we're trying to find out is their capabilities [to mount a coup]. They have the intentions, but we have to check whether they're capable of doing it," he told reporters.

Senga declared that the capture of 1st Lt. Lawrence San Juan, one of four Magdalo officers who escaped from their detention in January, had in a way reduced the threat of destabilization against the government. *(See story on Page A1.)*

HOT SEAT: AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga toughs it out during his confirmation hearing conducted by the Commission on Appointments and the defense committee at the Senate. JESS YUSON

"Definitely, that (capture) will be a big blow to those attempting to destabilize the situation," he said.

Senga said the military was also investigating the existence of the Young Officers Union of the New Generation and Reformist AFP, which claimed they were mounting a series of "explosive activities" until President Macapagal-Arroyo stepped down.

"We are looking into these matters so we can establish what's the truth," he said.

Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, Army chief, however, went as far as to say that these two groups were bogus. "I think they're fake. They're nothing but a creation of individuals with a paper and a pen," he said.

Senga, for his part, advised the media to be more discerning when dealing with such groups.

"There's a lot of propaganda, threats, destabilization going around," he said.

The way it was: Confetti to rain on Ayala Avenue

From page A1

alities who were among those who fought Ferdinand Marcos's strongman rule will return to the streets to "reenact" the Makati rallies.

"The rallies in Makati brought together all sectors of society and could be considered dry runs for the Edsa 1986 revolution," Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay said in a statement.

The protest actions, marked by blizzards of yellow confetti, were mounted by broad opposition groups in the wake of the assassination of Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. on Aug. 21, 1983.

To faithfully relive the Makati rallies, City Hall said the Friday affair would serve as "a reunion for personalities who were active in the anti-Marcos struggle" and as "a tribute to Aquino and other martyrs of the anti-dictatorship movement."

The Makati City council had earlier passed an ordinance declaring Feb. 22-25 of every year a time "for celebrating the spirit of Edsa 1986."

Cory et al.

Participants are to gather at around 3 p.m. at the intersection of Gil Puyat and Ayala Avenues in Makati and push toward the Ayala Avenue-Paseo de Roxas intersection to lay a wreath at the Ninoy Aquino monument.

Among those expected to attend are Aquino's wife, former President Corazon Aquino, who was swept to power by Edsa I.

Also invited to take part in the memorial are human rights lawyers during the Marcos regime and members of the August Twenty One Movement (Atom) led by Aquino's brother, Makati Rep. Agapito "Butz" Aquino.

"Makati is holding a simple tribute ... if only to remind the people that the spirit of Edsa 1986 is still alive, and must be kept alive for future generations," said Binay, himself a human rights lawyer during martial rule.

Cautious Palace

Binay assailed Malacañang's "low-key" commemoration of Edsa I, saying the controversy-hounded administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo appeared to be cautious and "clearly does not want to provide the opportunity for a large gathering of people, including many personalities who are not supportive" of it.

"I find it rather disconcerting that on the 20th year of Edsa 1986, the national leadership has chosen to do the unforgivable: Relegate the celebration of one of our proudest moments as a people to a low-key event, not even befitting a foundation day celebration of a city," the mayor said.

According to the program organized by the recently reinstituted Edsa People Power Commission, Ms Arroyo will lay a wreath tomorrow at the Libingan ng mga Bayani in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

Ms Arroyo herself was installed in Malacañang in 2001 through Edsa II, which ousted her predecessor, President Joseph Estrada.

Last year, she survived ouster demands in major protest actions in Makati, which were mounted by a broad opposition that believed she had rigged the May 2004 presidential election.

Since the allegations of poll fraud were raised, Ms Arroyo has lost the support of her former allies, including former President Aquino.

GO NEGOSYO ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUMMIT & EXPO

DAY 1 • February 23, 2006 • Every Nation Leadership Institute, Fort, Taguig

Time	Activity
9:15	Pre-Programme All guests must be seated by 9AM
10:00	National Anthem: Champagne Morales Invocation: Gary Valenciano
10:15	WELCOME ADDRESS: Hon. Jose Concepcion III
10:30	GO NEGOSYO Music Video
10:35	• Launching of GEN-E Presidential Scholarships of PCE / Entrepreneurs School of Asia • PCE-DepEd Best High School Entrepreneurship Program • PCE-CHED State University / College Entrepreneurship Award • Doña Consuelo Madrigal Collantes Award for Outstanding Entrepreneurship Students • Doña Consuelo Madrigal Collantes Award for Outstanding Entrepreneurship Teacher • Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship Award for Big Brother of Filipino Entrepreneurs
11:15	FORUM 1: Building National Confidence and Optimism To Inspire More Successful Filipino Entrepreneurs Moderators: Rico Hizon Anchor/Reporter Asia Business Report, BBC World Anna Marie Periquet Lead Advocate, GO NEGOSYO Panelists: • Hon. Jose Concepcion III, Presidential Consultant for Entrepreneurship • Socorro Ramos, Gen. Manager, National Book Store • Dr. Rolando Hortaleza, Chairman and CEO, Splash Group of Companies • Atty. Felipe Gozon, President and CEO, GMA Network • Vivienne Tan, President, Entrepreneurs School of Asia • Henry Lim Bon Liong, Chairman and CEO, Sterling Group of Companies • Rodrigo Rivera, Chairman, RD Fishing Ventures • Grace Glory Go, Executive Vice President, Star Group of Publications • Dennis Valdes, Director, Inquirer Group of Publications
12:00	Entertainment: Martin Nievera
12:15	Lunch Break
1:10	FORUM 2: A Global Market Beckons The Filipino Entrepreneur Moderators: Rico Hizon Anchor/Reporter Asia Business Report, BBC World Anna Marie Periquet Lead Advocate, GO NEGOSYO Panelists: • Howard Belton, Chairman and CEO, Unilever Philippines Inc. • Dr. Paco Sandejas, Managing Partner, Narra VC • Guillermo Luchangco, Chairman, ICCP Group • Menardo Jimenez Jr., Senior Vice President, PLDT • Ben Colayco, General Manager, Level Up!
2:00	FORUM 3: Uncommon Heroes for the Common Good Moderators: David Celdran* Director for Current Affairs and Channel Operations, ANC ABS-CBN Broadcasting Center Karen Davila Main Anchor, Insider ABS-CBN Broadcasting Center Panelists: • Dr. Justin Arboleda, Scientist-Inventor, Coconet • Francisco Colayco, Personal Investing Guru • Ray Gapuz Jr., Chairman, R.A. Gapuz Review Center • Dylan Wilk, Spokesman, Gawad Kalinga • Rina Lopez-Bautista, President, Knowledge Channel • Adolfo Geronimo, President, Alang Alamin
3:00	TALK: Breeding The Entrepreneurial Mindset and Culture By Raju Mandhyan - Chairman, Philippine India Business Council
3:20	FORUM 4: New Approaches in Entrepreneurship Education Moderators: David Celdran* Director for Current Affairs and Channel Operations, ANC ABS-CBN Broadcasting Center Ces Oreña Drilon Broadcast Journalist, Pipol ABS-CBN Broadcasting Center Panelists: • Prof. Joel Santos, Director, Entrepreneurs School of Asia • Prof. Andy Ferrera, Entrep Guru of Moneytalk • Prof. Danny Cabulay, Dean, Far Eastern University College of Business • Genevieve Ledesma-Tan, President, Southville International School and Colleges • Prof. Amel Uy, Chairman, Business Management Department, De La Salle University • Prof. Patrick Chan, Director, Technopreneurship Program, National University of Singapore • Dennis Posadas, Author, Rice Bowl and Chips • Armando Maciel, Jr., Director, Ateneo JGSOM Business Accelerator
4:20	CULMINATING FORUM: Triggering the Age of Entrepreneurship in the Philippines Moderators: Korina Sanchez* Host, Rated K, Handa Na Ba Kayo? ABS-CBN Broadcasting Center Panelists: • Secretary Arthur Yap, Presidential Adviser on Jobs Generation • Secretary Estrella Alabastro, Department of Science and Technology • Chairman Carlito Puno, Commission on Higher Education • OIC/Secretary Fe Hidalgo, Department of Education • Undersecretary Zorayda Amelia Alonzo, CEO, Small Business Guarantee and Finance Corporation • Executive Director Gondelina Amata, National Livelihood Support Fund • Governor Luis Raymund F. Villafuerte, Province of Camarines Sur • Aurelio Parisotto, Senior Enterprise Development Specialist, International Labor Organization • Johnlu Koa, Marketing Professor and Founder, The French Baker • Prof. Josephine Aguilar, University of Sto. Tomas Department of Sociology
5:30	Closing

DAY 2 • February 24, 2006 • Market! Market! Trade Halls A & B, Fort, Taguig

Time	Activity	Seminar Room 1	Seminar Room 2	Mentoring Area
10:00	Opening Ceremonies Cutting of Ribbon Host: Johnny Litton Sen. Manuel Villar Sen. Manuel Roxas II Sen. Francis Pangilinan* Cong. Wilhelmino Alvarado* Mayor Rosendo Capco Mayor Freddie Tinga Aurelio Montinola III Government Officials Partner Organizations Lucy Torres-Gomez	International Workshop on Technopreneurship Conducted by Prof. Patrick Chan, Director of Technopreneurship Program National University of Singapore Host: DOST PARTICIPANTS: Technopreneurship Program - Partners		
	Viewing of Exhibit			Robert Trota (Max's) Yvette Pardo Orbeta (Wendy's) Butz Bartolome (Figaro)
11:00	Opening Program			Johnlu Koa (The French Baker) Maria Ester Bautista (Folloscco Group of Companies)
11:30				Les Reyes (Reyes Haircutters) John Tiong (Peugeot)
12:00	LUNCH BREAK: Feng Shui Master Charlie Chao's Business Outlook			Jean Henri Lhuillier (Cebuana Lhuillier) Mars Chua (PRA) Jimmyton Araneta (The Aircon Experts)
12:30				
1:00	DZMM RADYO NEGOSYO sa Market! Market! with Carl Balita & Anna Marie Periquet		Easy Tips on How to Start a Retail Business and How to Supply to Retailers By: Steven T. Cua, President, Phil. Amalgamated Supermarket Association Inc. (PAG-ASA), Welcome Supermart	Suresh Mirpuri (New Barbizon Fashion) Joey Sunico (Makati Skyline) Edward Lim (Prima Pasta)
1:30				Henry Lim Bon Liong (Sterling Paper) Joji Ban (PCCI) Dolby Bragais (North Road)
2:00	"Elevator Pitch" Exhibition by Business Plan Contest Winners & Runners-up			Vince Padilla (Padi's Point) Rommel Juan (Binalot) Joey Singian (Video City)
2:30	and Business Plan Competition Brief PCE/PESO, CFBC, ENEDA, JCI, HSBC, TIES, OWA, GEN-P			Tess Ngan Tian (Lot's-a-Pizza) Ben Colayco (Level Up!)
3:00				Carl Balita (QC Chamber of Commerce) JC Lavista (Lavista Group of Companies)
3:10	Awarding of PCE-ENEDA Cup Winners			
3:30				Chit Juan (Figaro) Tony Abad (Trade Advisory Services)
3:40	MOA Signing SERDEF and the Philippine Internet Commerce Society			
4:00	Safeguarding and Optimizing Your Intellectual Capital By: Intellectual Property Office		Easy on the pocket Business Ideas By: Food Cart Association of the Philippines	Luis Pellicer (UNI Ballpen)
4:30				Cary Go (Vergo Flowers Mfg.)
5:00				Jose Cho Soler (Crystal Clear Water) Marissa Andal (Andamar) Grace Tiongco (First Credit Consultants)
7:00	GO NEGOSYO Concert with Orange and Lemons & Up Dharma Down Band at the Central Plaza, Market! Market!			
				* Joey Concepcion and Anna Marie Periquet will join various time slots

DAY 3 • February 25, 2006 • Market! Market! Trade Halls A & B, Fort, Taguig

Time	Activity	Seminar Room 1	Seminar Room 2	Mentoring Area
10:00	The Franchise Boom: Now is the Time to Get Started By: Association of Filipino Franchisers Inc.	International Workshop on Technopreneurship Conducted by: Prof. Patrick Chan, Director of Technopreneurship Program National University of Singapore Host: DOST PARTICIPANTS: Technopreneurship Program Partners	Franchise Your Business: An Option for Growth By: Philippine Franchise Association	Usec. Mel Alonzo (SBGFC)
10:30				Champ Reyes (Royal Carribean)
11:00	The Entrepreneur: Know Thyself By: Les Ledesma, Executive Director, Center for International Education			Leo Rungon (Informatics) Butz Bartolome (Figaro)
11:30				Leo Rungon (Informatics)
12:00				Les Reyes (Reyes Haircutters)
12:30				Luis Pellicer (UNI Ballpen) Bernardo Jorge Mitra (LIVECOR)
1:00	Finding Your Opportunity of a Lifetime: Where do Entrepreneurs Get Their Ideas By: Joy Bernardo, Executive Director, Let's Go Foundation		Demystifying the Stock Market By: Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE)	Greg Banzon (Kao Consumer Phils.) Edwin Moran (Marom, Inc.)
1:30				Bing Limpoco (PFA) Manvel Camadang (Grupo Filipino Producers)
2:00	Moving Innovations to Market By: Max Arroyo, CEO, Hybridigm Consulting			Rommel Juan (Binalot) Romcy Sanctores (Sencom)
2:30				Richie Cuna (AFFI, Fiorgelato)
3:00	The Essentials of a Successful Business Start-up By: Joel Santos, Director, Entrepreneurs School of Asia			Ray Gapuz (Gapuz Review Center) JC Lavista (Lavista Group of Companies)
3:30				Chit Juan (Figaro)
4:00	FORUM: Financing Programs that Work			Tess Ngan Tian (Lot's-a-Pizza) Victor Tan (Bobson)
4:30	Moderator Mau Bolante, Professor Asian Institute of Management Panelists National Livelihood Support Fund, Personal Bank Loan providers, ABS-CBN Bayan Microfinance Foundation, Pawnshops, Cooperatives			Rolando Hortaleza (Splash)
5:00				Jo Magsaysay (Potato Corner / Coffee Experience)
				* Joey Concepcion and Anna Marie Periquet will join various time slots

* final list of speakers for confirmation

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Lower film taxes get GMA nod

By Philip C. Tubeza

TO SAVE THE AILING LOCAL MOVIE industry, Malacañang has finally agreed to support a proposed bill reducing the amusement tax, Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. said yesterday.

Revilla said President Macapagal-Arroyo on Monday committed to certify as a priority measure Senate Bill No. 2158 which calls for the reduction of the amusement tax from 30 percent to 10 percent.

He said the bill, which he co-authored with fellow actors Senators Lito Lapid and Jinggoy Estrada, would give the film industry "the breather it so needed."

"Year after year, we see less and less Filipino movies being produced because nobody wants to gamble anymore. Producers don't want to incur heavy losses but with the passage of this bill, we can again look at a revitalized industry," Revilla said.

He said he got Ms Arroyo's commitment after he and key industry players met with her for two hours.

He said they appealed to the President to help reduce the taxes imposed on the industry and to stem intellectual piracy, the "two main reasons for the continuous operational losses," they said.

Currently the movie industry "is suffering from the collection of two business taxes" imposed by the national and local governments, Revilla said.

Local government units collect an amusement tax on theater admission tickets at the top rate of 30 percent. With the value-added tax, the Bureau of Internal Revenue took another 10 percent, he said, resulting in total taxes of 40 percent.

Local producers complained this was "unjust and confiscatory," he said.

Revilla said movie industry leaders, for their part, also vowed to pool their resources to curb film piracy.

He said the President directed the Intellectual Property Office, the Optical Media Board (OMB) and other agencies concerned to combine and strengthen their forces to stop piracy.

In addition, Revilla said he brokered a truce between actors Leo Martinez and Edu Manzano who had quarreled over the proceeds of the Metro Manila Film Festival (MMFF).

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, February 22, 2006
Chair of Peter, Apostle

1st Reading: 1 P 5:1-4
Gospel: Matthew 16:13-19

Jesus came to Caesarea Philippi. He asked his disciples, "What do people say of the Son of Man? Who do they say I am?" They said, "For some of them you are John the Baptist, for others Elijah or Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

Jesus asked them, "But you, who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Jesus replied, "It is well for you, Simon Barjona, for it is not flesh or blood that has revealed this to you but my Father in heaven.

"And now I say to you: You are Peter (or Rock) and on this rock I will build my Church; and never will the powers of death overcome it.

"I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven: whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and what you unbind on earth shall be unbound in heaven."

Commentary

The leader/teacher of Jesus' Church is to be an elder and a witness to the sufferings of Christ, hoping to share his glory too. It is not being old, but being steeped in suffering and caring for others as a shepherd does his/her sheep, generously and leading by example that makes for one who keeps the Church in imitation of Jesus the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep. Nothing can stand against the Church but those who lead and those who follow must be subject to the Father of all standing in the world, but also against it—when it must do so—to be true to the crucified Christ.

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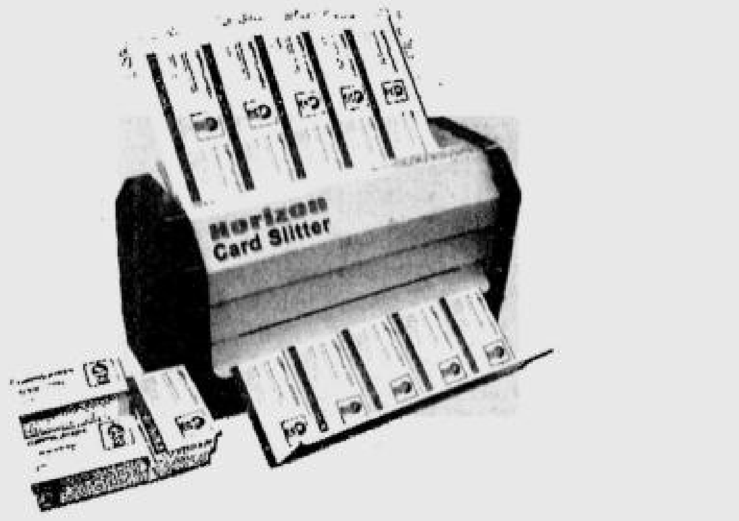

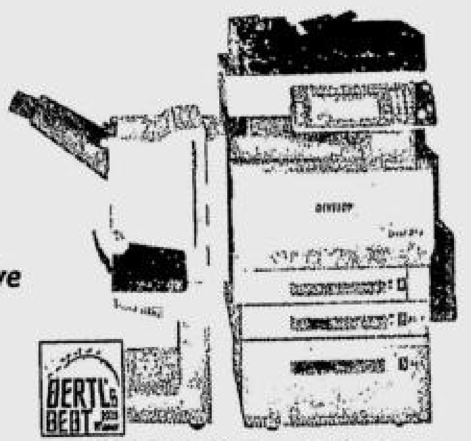

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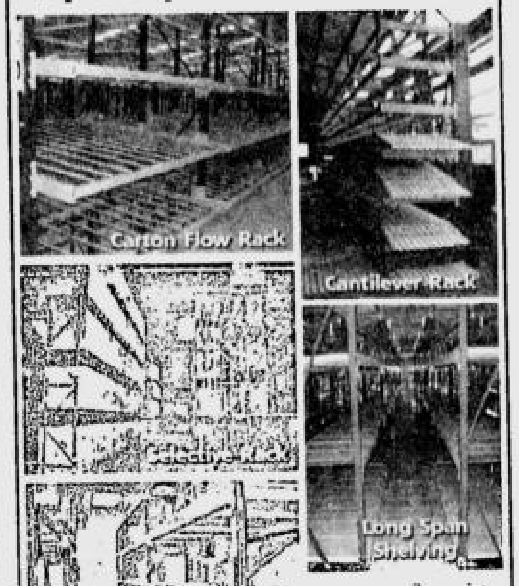

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Cheaper medicine just as good, says gov't importer

CHEAP DOES NOT necessarily mean inferior.

Robert Pagdanganan, president of the government-owned Philippine International Trading Corp., which imports inexpensive drugs, said he wanted to debunk the myth that lower-priced drugs were ineffective.

Generic drugs, he said, work the same as branded ones.

"Generics are as efficacious and safe as branded medicine," Pagdanganan told the Bulong Pulungan forum.

He said generic drugs were manufactured using the same guidelines as the more expensive ones.

He said he believed the myth about cheap medicines was being spread by the branded drug manufacturers.

He said the drugs imported by the PITC were checked thoroughly by the Bureau of Food and Drugs.

Perception

Pagdanganan said the aversion to the cheaper imported medicine may also have something to do with Filipinos' negative perception of India.

He said India was a highly progressive country and the medicines it manufactured were up to par.

The PITC-imported medicines are available in the "Botika ng Bayan" drugstores.

Another "pharmaceutical myth" that Pagdanganan debunked was that lowering the cost of medicines would cause the multinational companies to lose money and shut down.

He said that, on the contrary, if the drug companies brought down their prices, their sales would increase.

He said many Filipinos today were not buying medicines because of the high cost.

3rd myth

The PITC president also contested a third myth that said drug companies had to raise their prices to recover research and development costs.

He said a US study showed that the cost of research and development was not as high as the companies claimed.

Pagdanganan said it was important to debunk the myths because they hindered Filipinos' access to affordable medicine. The move was also part of the PITC's mission to bring lower-priced medicine to Filipinos, he said.

He said the prices of medicine in the country were among the highest in the world.

He cited the pain reliever Ponstan, for instance, which costs P21.82 in the Philippines but sells for P2.61 in India and P1.38 in Pakistan.

He said medicine prices in the country were controlled by a cartel of pharmaceutical companies and a drug chain, which was why they were high.

He said the PITC offered an alternative with the Botika ng Bayan, where the medicines are about 30 percent cheaper than in the regular drugstores.

Botika ng Bayan branches number over 1,000 and the PITC is aiming to increase this to 2,500 this year, he said. *Leila B. Salaverria*

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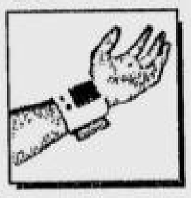
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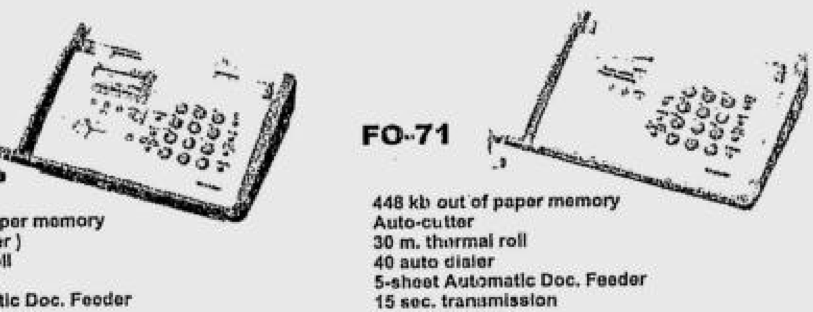
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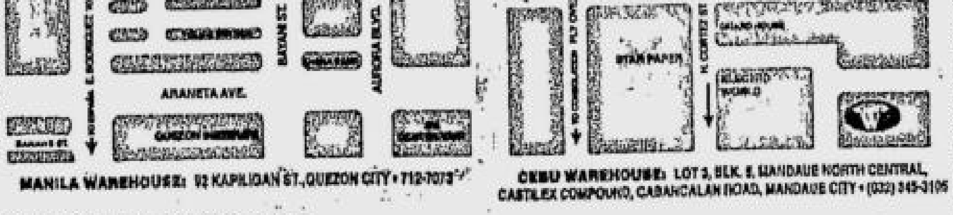

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Europe battles to calm bird flu fears

BRUSSELS—EU FARM MINISTERS TRIED MONDAY TO CALM consumer fears that bird flu would spread to the bloc's poultry, as Nigeria found the potentially lethal virus in three new states and the capital Abuja.

While no poultry has been struck by the disease in the European Union, meat sales in the industry have plunged 70 percent in Italy, at least 40 percent in Greece, 15 percent in France and 10 percent in Portugal.

France, Europe's top poultry producer, was on a high state of alert after becoming the sixth EU country to confirm a case of the highly pathogenic strain of H5N1 which can kill humans.

"We must not give in to panic," said Austrian Agriculture Minister Josef Proell, whose country holds the EU's rotating presidency. "The disease remains confined to wild birds."

While the virus has infected chickens on the EU's doorstep in Ukraine and Romania, outbreaks in Bulgaria as well as EU states Italy, France, Greece, Austria, Germany and Slovenia have only hit wild birds like swans and ducks.

"There is no reason for European citizens not to consume poultry meat and poultry products," EU health commissioner Markos Kyprianou added.

"We have to keep in mind that we are talking about an animal disease. It's not a human disease," he said. "It's a virus that is difficult to transmit to humans."

More than 90 people have died from bird flu in China, Southeast Asia, Iraq and eastern Turkey since 2003 after contracting the H5N1 virus from infected poultry.

While the virus cannot currently be passed between humans, experts fear that it could mutate if it were to mix with common flu genes and spark a world-wide pandemic that could kill millions of people.

No human infections have been reported in Europe.

In an effort to limit the spread to poultry, Germany sent 250 soldiers to the Baltic Sea island of Ruegen, where the virus first broke out last week, to help army specialists pick up dead birds.

Cars travelling to or from Ruegen, a popular holiday destination which is joined to the mainland by a bridge, had to drive through disinfectant baths.

"The main goal is to stop the spread to domestic animals," a government spokesperson said.

Germany has joined Denmark, France, Greece, Luxembourg, The Netherlands and Slovenia in ordering all poultry to be shut indoors.

France's first case of the most dangerous form of H5N1 was confirmed on Saturday in a wild duck found dead near the central-eastern city of Lyon.

The virus was also found in Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, Ukraine and Russia.

Bosnia, meanwhile, ordered the slaughter of nearly 4,500 poultry after additional tests confirmed wild swans in a central region H5 virus.

Bird flu hit tourism too, as about 8,000 Scandinavian tourists cancelled holidays to Romanian seaside resorts after bird flu outbreaks along the Black Sea, German tourism operator TUI said.

In Nigeria, a sprawling country of 36 states that was the first in Africa to confirm the presence of H5N1, the authorities confirmed that bird flu had now been found in six states plus the capital.

"To date, there are six states: Kano, Kaduna, Plateau, Bauchi, Katsina and Zamfara and the Federal Capital Territory," Information Minister Frank Nweke told reporters in Abuja. *AFP*

A MAN is surrounded by a sea of pigeons, Feb. 20 in Paris. France braces today for further cases of bird flu with test results due on around 15 wild birds, after the country confirmed its first case of the deadly strain of the virus last Feb. 17. AFP

Afghan cartoon protesters threaten to join al-Qaida

JALALABAD, AFGHANISTAN—Hundreds of Afghan students shouted support on Monday for Osama bin Laden and threatened to join al-Qaida during a protest against cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad.

Speaking after a weekend of deadly riots in Nigeria and Libya, Pope Benedict said the world's religions and their symbols had to be respected but warned such protests were wrong.

However, Pakistan's main Islamist alliance vowed to broaden its campaign against the cartoons with protests targeted at the US and Pakistani presidents.

The protest in the eastern Afghan city of Jalalabad passed off largely without violence. Students gathered at the university campus chanted "Death to Denmark," "Death to America" and "Death to France," a witness said.

They also shouted support for al-Qaida leaders Osama bin Laden and Ayman al Zawahri.

Shouting "Death to Karzai," they demanded President Hamid Karzai close the embassies of Denmark, the United States and France and expel their forces from Afghanistan.

"If they abuse the Prophet of Islam again we will all become al-Qaida," the students shouted.

Two weeks ago in Afghanistan, at least 10 people were killed in several days of protests over the cartoons but violent demonstrations there have largely petered out.

The cartoons, published in a Danish newspaper last year and reprinted in European papers, have sparked worldwide protests by Muslims who believe it is blasphemous to depict the Prophet.

In a speech to the new Moroccan ambassador to the Vatican, the Pope said: "In order to promote peace and understanding between peoples and mankind it is both vital and urgent that religions and their symbols are respected and that believers are not the object of provocations that wound their religious feelings."

"However, intolerance and violence can never be justified as a response to any offense, because it is a response that is incompatible with the sacred principles of religion," he added.

Addressing an Arab League meeting in Algiers, League chief Amr Moussa said: "We don't want a clash of civilizations. We don't want a confrontation with the West. What we want is a dialogue between our two civilizations." *Reuters*

WORLDBRIEFS

65 Mexican miners trapped

SAN JUAN DE SABINAS, Mexico—Chances of survival dimmed on Monday for 65 Mexican miners trapped underground by a blast at a coal mine, where emergency workers wielding only picks and shovels struggled to dig through to the men. Family members who were gathered at the mine in the northern state of Coahuila grew increasingly desperate, screaming at management for news of their loved ones. "We only want answers," one relative shouted. "They don't want to tell us anything." A rescue team got within 100 meters of where two men had been working on a conveyor belt when Sunday's gas explosion occurred, but poor ventilation and the risk of rock falls hampered efforts to save them. Rescuers were using only hand tools for fear of sparking another blast. *Reuters*

23 Iraqis killed in attack

BAGHDAD—At least 23 Iraqis were killed and 60 wounded Monday in a slew of attacks, including a suicide bombing in which 12 commuters burnt to death on a Baghdad minibus in a Shiite neighborhood of northern Baghdad, an interior ministry official said. Rescue teams combed the vehicle's blackened hulk to extract charred human remains while eight wounded survivors were rushed to hospital. In another bombing, 19 day laborers waiting to be hired for work were hurt in central Baghdad, an interior ministry official said. The carnage could have been worse as police discovered a nearby car packed with explosives which had failed to go off. "I was thrown back and everything was flying around me," said Ammar Jabbar Karim, 28, who was wounded in the arm and both his legs. *AFP*

Militants strike Nigerian oil targets anew

WARRI, Nigeria—Nigerian militants blew up an oil pipeline and a military houseboat on Monday, extending a campaign of sabotage in the world's eighth largest exporter which has already cut supplies by a fifth. The militants, who are holding nine foreign hostages, vowed to prevent Royal Dutch Shell from using the damaged Forcados tanker loading platform, which accounts for 15 percent of Nigerian exports, and threatened an even more devastating series of attacks on the whole region. "Shell Nigeria can confirm that Koremo manifold on the Trans-Forcados pipeline was destroyed in fresh attacks early this morning. Also an abandoned house boat in the area was sunk," Shell said in a statement. No new oil production was hit in the latest attacks. *Reuters*

Austrian court jails British historian

VIENNA—Right-wing British historian David Irving was sentenced to three years in prison by an Austrian court Monday for denying the Holocaust 17 years ago, despite his claim to have changed his views. Irving, 67, had pleaded guilty at the trial in Vienna on a charge dating from 1989 of denying the Holocaust of European Jewry but insisted that he no longer questioned the existence of gas chambers at the Nazi's Auschwitz concentration camp. Irving, a controversial figure who has had brushes with the law in several countries, appeared stunned by the three-year sentence and told reporters as he walked out of court: "I'm very shocked and I'm going to appeal." But chief judge Peter Liebetreu said in his final decision that Irving's "confession" of changing his mind "did not seem to us remorseful." *AFP*

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Thaksin's key allies urge him to resign

BANGKOK—LAWMAKERS FROM THAI Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's ruling party on Tuesday urged their embattled leader to quit, breaking ranks for the first time amid escalating calls for his resignation.

Thaksin said he would dissolve parliament and force new elections if political pressures on him become too strong, but that he will not resign, the government spokesperson said Monday.

Anti-Thaksin sentiment stepped up another notch after Chamlong Srimuang, Thaksin's mentor and an influential former politician, called for Thaksin to step down, saying Monday that he "no longer has the legitimacy to run the country."

Thaksin has come under heavy fire over his family's 73.3 billion baht ($1.9 billion) sale of its controlling stake in telecom giant Shin Corp. to Singapore's state-owned investment company.

Critics accuse him of corruption, abuse of power and manipulation of laws.

Four members of parliament from Thaksin's Thai Rak Thai party on Tuesday joined a growing chorus of his opponents.

"I want to urge Thaksin to make a sacrifice by resigning for the sake of nation," said Vinai Sompong, a lawmaker from Bangkok. "He has lost legitimacy since the day that he sold Shin Corp. to foreigners under dubious circumstances."

Salit Santimetaneedol, a member of parliament from Khon Kaen province, pressed for the premier to step aside for a new party leader. "He should resign and appoint one of our lawmakers to replace him."

Thai Rak Thai lawmakers Suphol Fongngam and Suthichai Janarakham made similar calls, saying their party is so unpopular that if Thaksin dissolved parliament, it would be unlikely to win a new election.

Political analyst Sompob Manarungsan of Chulalongkorn University said the Thai Rak Thai lawmakers' opposition shows disunity within the party.

"He has been cornered by his opponents ... he has to dissolve the parliament or quit, otherwise the political tension will lead to violence," Sompob said.

Another anti-Thaksin protest Sunday is expected to be the largest yet, due in part to the presence of Chamlong, who is closely associated with the Santi Asoke Buddhist sect that has many thousands of adherents.

Chamlong, a former army officer, is a charismatic figure who helped spearhead protests in 1992 that ended up ousting a military-backed government. While his influence has waned, it was demonstrated again Tuesday when a senior internal security official said he supported Chamlong's position. *AP*

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Abbas, Hamas hold talks on new gov't

GAZA—PALESTINIAN PRESIDENT MAHmoud Abbas, reminding Hamas of his vision of peace with Israel, told its leaders in talks on Monday he would appoint the militant group's choice for prime minister to form the next government.

"The president will tomorrow (Tuesday) at 6 p.m. receive Ismail Haniyeh to give him the official accreditation letter to form the government," said Nabil Abu Rdainah, a senior Abbas adviser.

"He will clarify in the letter a number of issues that will need to be discussed and agreed upon," Abu Rdainah said, noting Abbas repeated to Hamas leaders the "political vision" he spelled out in a speech to parliament on Saturday.

In his address to the Hamas-led legislature, Abbas appealed to a future Hamas government to recognize past interim peace accords and commit itself to pursuing statehood through talks.

Hamas, an Islamic group dedicated to the destruction of the Jewish state, crushed Abbas' long-dominant Fatah faction in a Jan. 25 election on a platform of rooting out corruption in the Palestinian Authority.

Asked what would happen if Hamas, which on Saturday rejected Abbas' peace appeal, failed to agree policy guidelines with him, Abu Rdainah said: "We have to be patient. We hope the new government will continue the path of the old one."

Palestinian political analysts have predicted a constitutional crisis if Abbas and Hamas do not reach common ground. *Reuters*

Space offered as alternative site for burial

CAPE CANAVERAL—SCOTTY WILL BE blasted into space—not beamed up—and Gordo is returning for his third flight.

The planned launch sometime in March of a rocket carrying the ashes of actor James Doohan, who played chief engineer Montgomery Scott on "Star Trek," and Mercury program astronaut Gordon Cooper will give a fitting send-off to two men who helped popularize human space exploration.

The craft also will hold the ashes of 185 others, including a telephone technician, a nurse and a college student.

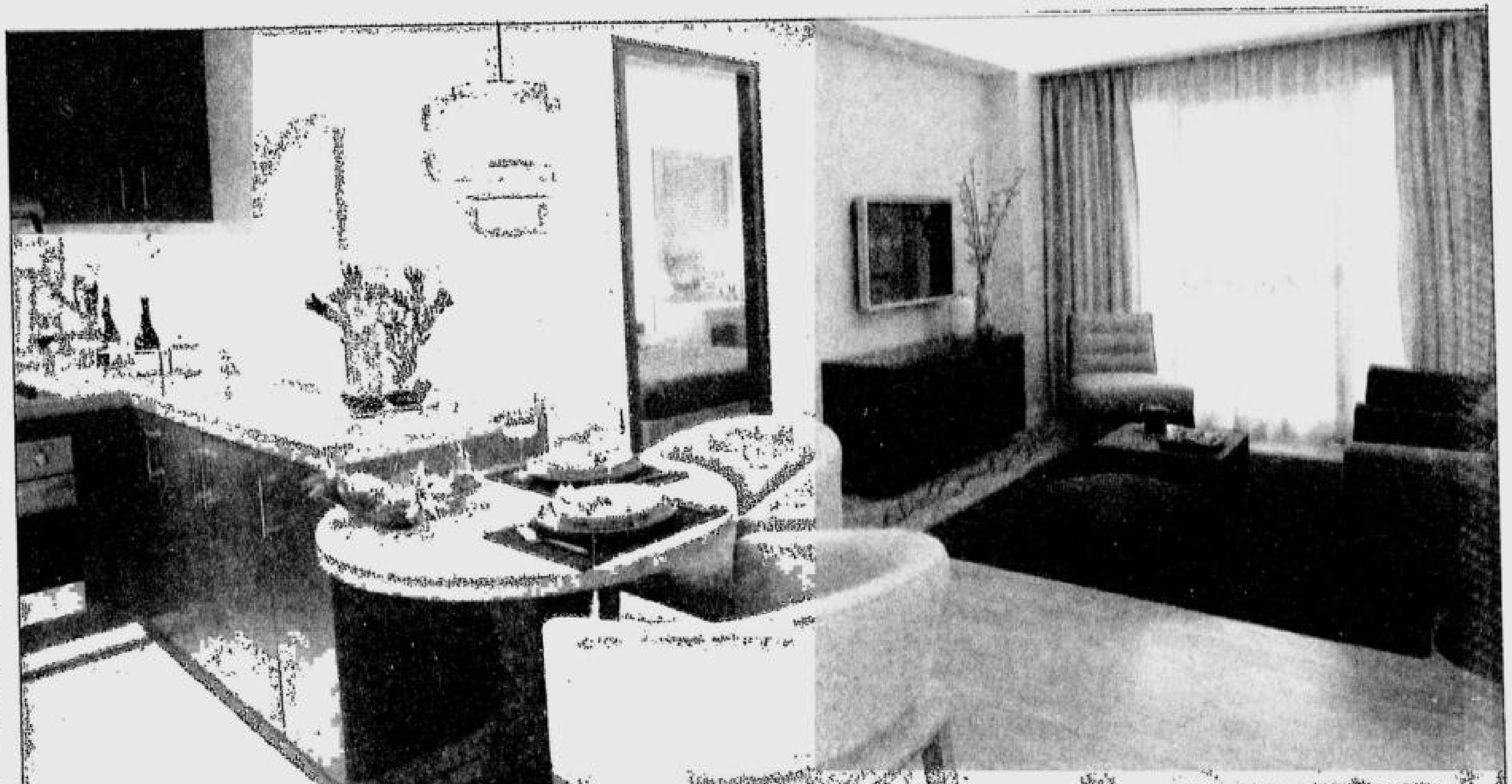
Their families paid $995 to $5,300 for the flight, being conducted by one of a handful of growing businesses hoping to give a space experience to the common people.

"It broadens the market, which is important to us because our whole business plan is about getting more people access to space," said Harvin Moore of Space Services Inc. of Houston, which is sponsoring the ashes flight. "Space needs to be affordable for all in some way."

Along with these services, space tourism businesses hope to send customers into suborbital space at a cost of $25,000 to $250,000 a person, far less than the $20 million businessman Gregory Olsen paid Russia last fall for a ride to the International Space Station. Richard Branson's company, Virgin Galactic, already has 100 people who have paid $200,000 apiece for flights, which the company has said it hopes to begin in 2008.

Kathie Mayo knew her 19-year-old daughter would have loved the idea of having her ashes sent into space. Rachael Mayo died in 2003 from complications of Hodgkin's lymphoma.

"She would have said 'It's about time, Mom, rather than keeping my ashes around the house,'" said Kathie Mayo of Winona, Minnesota. *AP*



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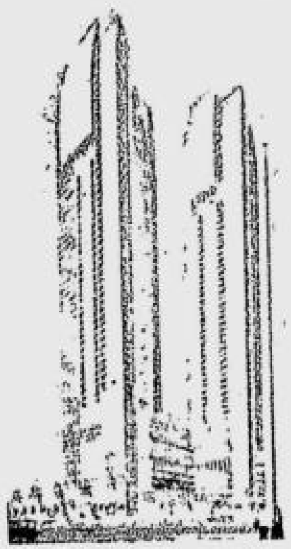

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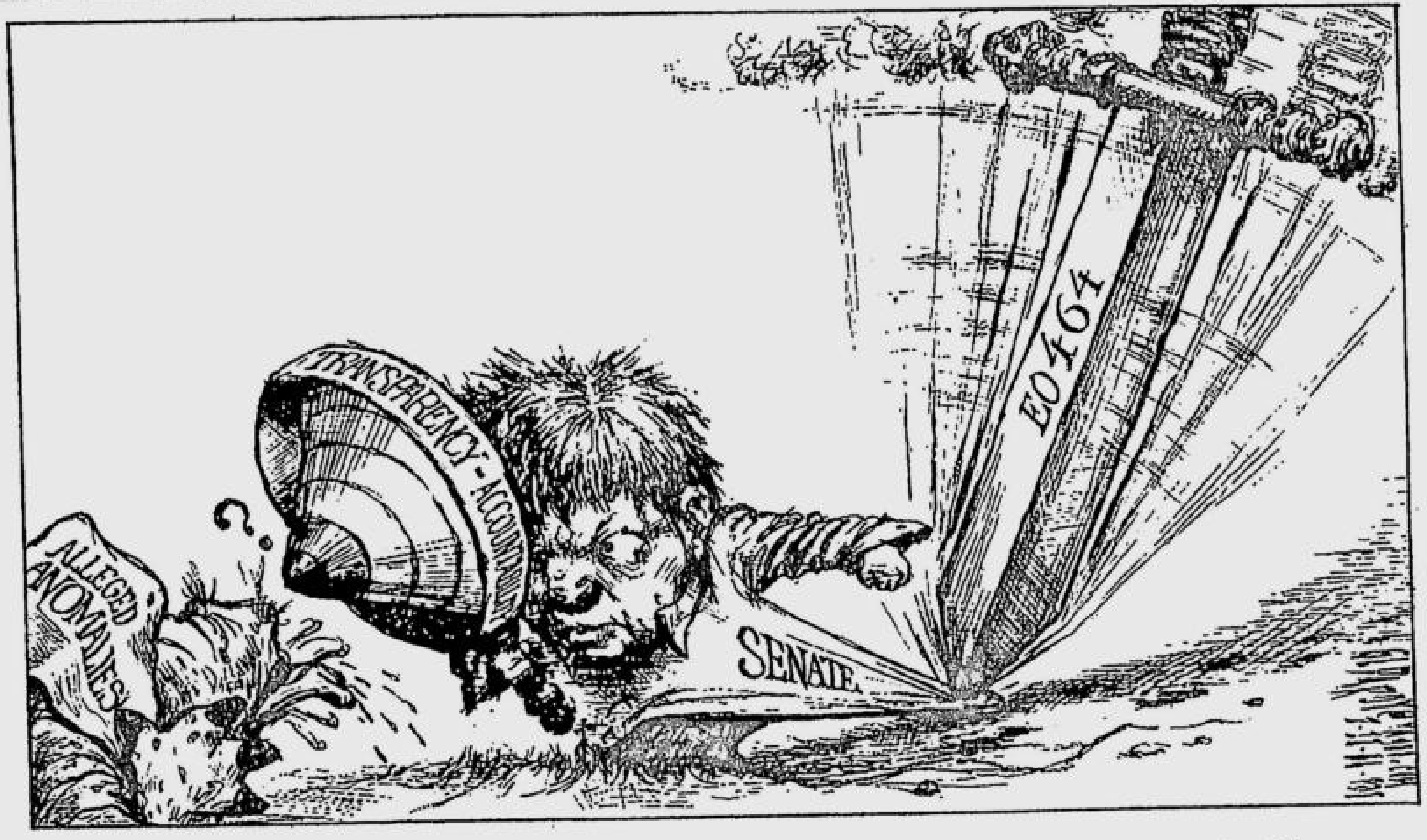


Pure terrorism

EDITORIAL

MERE MINUTES AFTER THE EXPLOSION—"AS loud as a 21-gun salute," Palace employees said (and they should know whereof they speak when making such noise comparisons)—startled Malacañang employees, people began to take astounding leaps of faith. Brig. Gen. Delfin Bangit, chief of the Presidential Security Group, while trying to moderate his words, proposed the theory that a "chemical combustion" had occurred, although not enough time had passed to justify even that rather pat conclusion. The President's Chief of Staff Michael Defensor was more rash, immediately pointing the finger at enemies of the administration, although he had to backpedal on his conclusions later on.

Within an equally short period of time, reporters began to receive a faxed statement from the Young Officers Union of the New Generation (YOUNG) and a brand-new entity calling itself the Reformist AFP, stating that they had "started today a series of explosive protest activities that will continue and even escalate until Gloria Arroyo leaves the Presidency of the Philippines and departs Malacañang Palace."

YOUNG, it turns out, is a group that should not be mistaken for another group with the same acronym: Young Officers Union of the new generation (YOUng), which has been faxing manifestos to the press signed by a "Lt. Col. Arsenio Alcantara," obviously a pseudonym. Reporters noticed that the threatening press release coming from YOUNG was unsigned.

To add to the confusion, on the same day, someone claiming to be 1st Lt. Lawrence San Juan, one of the four Magdalo rebel officers who escaped military detention last month, was interviewed over RMN radio. This person claimed military rebels would be "taking action before the end of February."

Yesterday, San Juan was apprehended in Batangas. The Armed Forces said he was arrested at around 5:45 a.m., and yet, San Juan was heard over the radio, at around 7 a.m., issuing dire warnings, including an announcement that rebels would undertake something drastic on Friday, and that residents near Malacañang should leave the place for their own safety.

The sum total of all these developments is a dangerous tangle of conflicting claims: the government has, on one hand, a well-meaning military officer (Bangit) eager to keep things calm, but at the expense of doing a thorough checking of the facts, and on the other hand, a top Palace official leaping to bloodcurdling conclusions at the drop of a hat. Then there is a group operating under an acronym, YOUNG, identical to a rebel group (YOUng), which suggests malicious plagiarism. And there is a person calling the media, speaking illogically but threateningly, pretending to be an escaped mutineer (San Juan), while the circumstances surrounding the real San Juan's capture strongly suggest it couldn't have been him saying those impractical and tactically illogical things over radio.

So what does the public know? It knows that a mysterious clutch bag was discovered in the Philippine Military Academy grandstand last Saturday, a disturbing development after government revealed what it claimed to be a plot to embarrass and even kidnap, or kill, President Macapagal-Arroyo. A few days later, a loud but not lethal explosion rocked the Palace, and the presidential guards had an immediate explanation on hand even as they were still gathering up the debris, while the President's alter ego rattled off a list of suspects. The media were bombarded with faxes sporting misleading acronyms, the airwaves began carrying a voice with a spurious claim to identity, and the faxes and the voice both behaved in a manner too incredible even for committed putschists: stating dates and places for their actions.

One thing is sure: terrorism is afoot. And it is terrorism in its purest form, using violence—or the threat of it—to pursue a particular political objective aimed at a civilian target. A dangerous game is under way, and half of the danger lies in the fact that at this point, no one can say with certainty whether this isn't all a plot hatched by a government eager to provide the pretext for a state of emergency. Or amateurish opponents of the government eager to provoke a backlash. Or even perhaps, simply a military faction that intends to pursue revolution by terrorizing the civilian population.

Now is the time to pass a total log ban bill

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE GOVERNMENT IS BRAINWASHING THE people into believing that the landslide in Southern Leyte was caused by heavy rains and not by deforestation, even repeatedly coming out with figures saying that the rainfall in the mountain from Feb. 1 to 16 measured 480 millimeters compared with the monthly average of just 137 mm. How did they know? There was no rain gauge on that mountain. The propaganda is obviously to absolve the government of negligence for allowing logging in the area.

Who are they kidding? For centuries, the Philippines have been drenched with heavy rains at the beginning of every rainy season—what we call the *"siyam-siyam,"* nine days and nine nights of continuous rains, but there were no landslides of the magnitude we are now having. Because then we still had the forests that held the soil together. Now we have landslides and floods everywhere because the forests have been cut down by loggers, both legal and illegal, and by *kaingineros*. Without trees, there are no more roots to hold the soil together and the rains wash them down the mountainsides. Without soil to sop up the water like blotters, the water gushes down to flood the lowlands.

The landslides became frequent only when Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo became President, and especially when she appointed Mike Defensor as secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Katharina Ann Berza of the Citizens Disaster Response Center (CDRC) noted a rising frequency in disasters (440 last year) during the last decade. I think the biggest disaster was when GMA became President.

There is no better proof of the role of logging in the landslides and floods than in the recent disasters in Quezon and Aurora and, earlier, in Ormoc, where the mud and floodwaters that buried the villages below carried with them thousands of logs cut by illegal loggers.

The government now says there was no logging in the mountains above St. Bernard, the municipality where new landslides brought death and destruction to Barangay Guinsaugon and wiped it off the map. Of course. The loggers have already left because there are no more trees to cut. Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. told the Kapihan sa Manila last Monday (the other guests were Sen. Alfredo Lim and Rep. Robert "Dodot" Jaworski Jr.) that in 1986 or 1987, 45 farmers meeting in a chapel in the neighboring barangay of Sogod to discuss how to fight the loggers in the mountains, were massacred by armed men believed to be guards of the logging company. There was only one survivor but no suspects have been arrested until now.

With the Southern Leyte tragedy and that of Aurora and Quezon, there is no better time to pass legislation for a total log ban. Pimentel recalled that he filed a bill calling for a total log ban when he first became a senator. The bill was passed by both the Senate and the House of Representatives, but during the conference committee meeting to reconcile the two versions, the House contingent did not show up and so the bill was not passed by the plenary until Congress adjourned.

That is not surprising. Many members of Congress were loggers or protectors of loggers. Some prominent political families in Mindanao, like the Antoninos, the Almendrases and the Plazas, launched their political careers with wealth derived from logging. (Most of their former logging concessions in their home provinces are bald until now, although their logging contracts with the government mandated them to reforest their concessions.) So how can we expect members of Congress to pass legislation for a total log ban?

Another law that should be passed is one separating the Department of Environment from the Department of Natural Resources. The present DENR has two contradictory functions: one, to preserve the environment, and the other, to exploit the natural resources. You can't do both efficiently at the same time because they cancel out each other. The Department of Environment should rank higher than the Department of Natural Resources, even higher than the Environmental Protection Agency of the United States which is under the Office of the President because it can be influenced by the president who, in turn, can be influenced by politicians and businessmen. It should be an independent constitutional body with automatic budget appropriations.

* * *

A resident of a neighboring barangay that escaped the fate of Guinsaugon swears that they were spared because a white lady appeared to her and told her a disaster was going to happen. She said several other people saw the lady. She said the whole barangay prayed the rosary and that probably saved them.

The story could be true or false, but I am sure more people would like to believe it. Filipinos are suckers for "miracle" stories. Which is probably why the priest in the church I went to last Tuesday chose it as the subject of his sermon. He said God was trying to tell us something or punishing us and recalled stories in the Bible in which God punished the people for their sins, such as the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the great flood that killed everything and everybody except the humans and animals in Noah's Ark, and the plague that afflicted Pharaoh's Egypt because he wouldn't let the Israelites go.

"Could God be punishing us because our President wouldn't let go?" he asked, and the people snickered. "Maybe the disasters will stop when she steps down."

"Abraham was willing to sacrifice his own son to please God," he continued. "Why can't she sacrifice Malacañang to save her people?"

When will they ever learn?

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

TWO THINGS I REMEMBER BEFORE AND after Marcos fell.

The first is that the talk in the years before Edsa was about succession. The question everyone was asking then (as now) was: But who is going to succeed Marcos? Or who is the alternative to Marcos?

At the time, no one seemed to fit the bill. Marcos achieved that illusion first of all by systematically weeding the field of potential rivals and successors. Fearing the military in particular—the Frankenstein monster of his own making—he held on to the generals who were loyal to him well past their retirement age. A practice that was not without its internal contradiction: the "overstaying generals" blocked the upward mobility of their younger counterparts, which made for a lot of grumbling in the ranks.

Among his own people in government, he practiced divide-and-rule, allowing, indeed encouraging, bickering among them. Protégés rose and fell, Juan Ponce Enrile, the fair-haired boy at the start of martial law, among them. Lest we forget, Enrile, like Marcos himself, was not a soldier, notwithstanding that he was the martial law minister of defense and struck martial poses—among others, toting a Galil during the Edsa victory. Marcos wasn't a soldier either, notwithstanding that he presided over a military coup. He just did a lot of martial posturing, aided by the myth of his fake guerrilla exploits and fake medals. Both he and Enrile were lawyers, and concededly clever ones.

The opposition Marcos caricatured, with no small help from the muzzled press. And at the time at least (as today), the opposition seemed to live up to the caricature. Marcos liked comparing Cory's and Butz's IQ, political and otherwise, to his and asking the nation if they preferred the quality of leadership they represented to him. He called the political exiles in the United States "steak commandos," in reference to their presumably indulgent lifestyle, a term that stuck. And, completely reminiscent of today, he harped on the fact that they couldn't get their act together, accusing each one of them of eyeing power for himself.

Marcos achieved the illusion, secondly, by self-advertisement. He of course never directly praised himself—GMA would go past him in that respect (*"wala silang plano, meron ako; wala silang direksyon, meron ako..."* [they have no plans, I do; they have no direction, I do]—but he never passed up the chance to aggrandize himself. He had an entire propaganda apparatus for the purpose. He (or Imelda) bathed the world in myth, having himself and Imelda painted as Malakas and Maganda, and he had a history of the nation written with him as its apotheosis—he was its destiny. The muzzled press extolled his virtues on a daily basis. He had even the Americans believing there was truly no alternative to him, no one could lead the nation after him, the Reagan administration till the end was still concocting transitional plans that included him in the belief that he was part of the solution even as he was the source of the problem.

Until Edsa erupted with the suddenness of Mt. Pinatubo exploding, Marcos seemed destined to last if not forever at least a long, long time, notwithstanding the corruption and rottenness that pervaded his regime and the depth of cynicism and despair that gripped the nation.

The second thing I remember was when Marcos fell. With the suddenness of early morning mist dissipating in the sun, gone overnight was the inevitability and formidability of the martial law regime, and indeed of Marcos, an inevitability and formidability that had stood for 14 years. For the martial law babies in particular, for whom the only president they had ever known was Marcos, it carried with it the shock of revelation. The astonishing thing was not that the martial law regime had finally ended, the astonishing thing was that it had lasted that long.

Indeed, the wonder was not that Marcos had finally been succeeded, the wonder was that he had not been succeeded sooner. Without power, Marcos was nothing, just a hollow man, a scarecrow twisting in the wind, a braggart who had lost his audience. The idea that no one could possibly succeed him was suddenly the most absurd thing in the world. Given where he had driven the country to, which was to the dogs, a dog would have made a better alternative. Given where he had driven the country to, which was to fall from being second only to Japan at the start of his term to being second only to Bangladesh by the end of it, a housewife would have made a better alternative.

And did—though as it turned out, not much better (but that is another story). Suddenly, after Marcos fell, the one person he had depicted as *"walang alam"* and the one person the foreign media had lauded as the Asian Joan of Arc seemed to radiate the patina of inevitability and formidability about her. Suddenly, the notion that "President Cory" was an oxymoron or contradiction in terms (as would be the notion of "President Erap" much, much later, until he became so) would seem the most ridiculous thing in the world. All of which only proves that such is the nature of power, it always gives its wearer a perfect fit. Until the next one comes along.

No, there is nothing inevitable about tyranny, there is nothing unchangeable about tyrants. In fact, the only inevitable thing about tyranny is that it ends. And the only unchangeable thing about tyrants is that they suck. When will they ever learn? as the song "Where Have All the Flowers Gone" goes.

Ah, yes. When will they ever learn?

Edsa revisited

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE FOUR DAYS, FROM FEB. 22 TO 25, 1986, were the shortest four days that changed the course of Philippine history. But 20 years after the People Power Revolution on Edsa, the nation remembers the event with waning enthusiasm. The official commemoration is muted, and the Arroyo administration, which is a beneficiary of Edsa II in 2001, has discouraged mass public demonstrations in remembrance of Edsa I, fearing perhaps that Edsa as a weapon for political change has a double cutting edge that can wound its possessor.

The tepid commemoration highlights the tensions that have dissolved the original coalition of February 1986, as some of its leading lights have gone separate ways. Former President Corazon Aquino, former Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and retired Gen. Fidel Ramos have been shifting alliances in the past 20 years.

Perhaps, we are no worse off than the grand coalitions of history which broke up after their military triumphs, as did the grand coalition that defeated Nazi Germany in 1945: the Western Allies and the former Soviet Union. Within a year after the fall of Berlin, Winston Churchill, in 1946, warned that "From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic an iron curtain has descended across the Continent" after communist regimes sponsored by Moscow had seized power in the liberated states of Eastern and Central Europe.

The purpose of remembrance of great events, like Edsa, is that the younger generations, who were not witness to the unfolding of history, do not forget the struggle of those who were caught in the flood tides of history, so that the tragedies of history will not happen again. Edsa was essentially the culmination of the struggle of the Filipino people to liberate themselves from 14 years of the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos.

This is what the nation is trying to remember today, but remembrance cannot be revived by the reenactment of the ceremonies focusing on the theatrical role of leading lights who occupied center stage in that uprising. There is today a strong current of recollections of the First and Second World Wars, shown in documentaries on TV based on black-and-white films. These films capture reality in the context of anecdotal recollections of people of their experiences in events that touched their lives. There is today a strong revival of memoirs and diaries of bit players of history without whose recollections the reconstruction of history would be incomplete and distorted. Their memoirs redress the bias that extols the exploits of the leaders in great battles, ignoring the toils of the foot soldiers in the trenches.

Despite the official effort to lower the profile of public demonstrations in the Edsa memorial, recollections of the unheralded participants in that event cannot any longer be entombed in diaries. They are coming forward to tell their story.

We have already heard and read too much of Ramos, Cory Aquino, Enrile, Jaime Cardinal Sin, the RAM glamour boys, swaggering with their Uzi sub-machine guns slung across their shoulders, some of the generals who switched allegiance at critical moments, and some high-profile politicians in the anti-Marcos movements. But Edsa does not belong to these high-profile actors who have written the history of Edsa from their points of view. Their picture of history is the elite's view of history as shaped by them—from the top. We should not forget that Edsa was a human flood of more than a million nameless and faceless people who thronged the street of their own accord, without expectation of rewards, without regard to risks as they faced tanks and APCs.

The significant development of the 20th anniversary commemoration is the emergence of recollections by more people who went to the streets and by lesser known players in the People Power Revolution that shook the world. These recollections are filling the gaps of history. These memoirs are revising history from the view of the inchoate and less articulate mass on the ground.

Edsa belongs to the people. They have stories to tell. It is the task of historians to tap these memories. So far, during these past 20 years, our version of history based on the elite's recollections, has fostered the myth that Edsa represented the capture of People Power by the elite. The members of the young generation who were not in the center of action in February 1986 cannot relate with the intoxicating atmosphere of that moment without being told what drove the masses to join the Edsa movement.

There has been a tendency to highlight military intervention in Edsa I and Edsa II as the critical factor in ousting Marcos and in bringing about the collapse of the government of President Joseph Estrada. This interpretation of political change since 1986 tends to devalue the importance of civil institutions, mass movements and legal/constitutional processes as frameworks within which to change governments. It fosters dependence on undemocratic institutions—such as the military—as agents of political change.

An overemphasis on military memoirs in the revision of Edsa's history tends to fortify the view held by the military component of the 1986 military mutiny in Camp Aguinaldo that it was the military rebellion that was mainly responsible for the overthrow of the Marcos regime. This interpretation installs its own heroes in the struggle against the dictatorship. This view runs counter to the interpretation that it was the civilians, responding to calls of civil society leaders, who saved the rebellious soldiers from slaughter by loyal Marcos troops.

These two views of Edsa history are colliding in this week's commemoration.

Heroes

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IT'S NOT AS IF THE FILIPINO PEOPLE WILL forget anytime soon most of the people profiled in the book "Heroes," published by Alay sa Bansa (ALAB) foundation and launched last Monday, Feb. 20, conceded by most as the date that marks the start of the glorious first "People Power" uprising.

Who will forget, and when will we forget, people like Lorenzo Tañada, Jovito Salonga, Jose Diokno, Soc Rodrigo, Doña Aurora Aquino, Don Chino Roces, Cecilia Muñoz Palma, Eggie Apostol, Fr. James B. Reuter, S.J., and their younger colleagues in the struggle: Evelio Javier, Joker Arroyo, Alran Bengzon, Jaime Ongpin, Teodoro Locsin, Jr., Rene Saguisag, Renato de Villa and June Keithley?

And as long as we remember Edsa and the events that transpired before and during those four days, we will also remember the Namfrel volunteers and the "Marvelous 35" computer operators at the Comelec count whose actions brought the world's attention to the fraudulent 1986 elections that directly led to Edsa. And who could ever forget the pictures of that confrontation between the Marines atop their tanks and the nuns armed only with rosaries, the women religious putting their lives on the line on the front lines of Edsa, and their hearts in their prayers behind the walls of their convents?

No, we won't forget them anytime soon, but there's a generation of Filipinos, the majority of our population, who know of them only vaguely, who do not in the strictest sense remember them but only faintly recognize their names and perhaps their reputations.

In the immediate, euphoric wake of the events at Edsa years ago, most of the books and media productions about it centered on the main characters on the drama: Ninoy and Cory Aquino, Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos, Jaime Cardinal Sin, Butz Aquino, Juan Ponce Enrile, Fidel V. Ramos, even Gringo Honasan. Through their stories and their words, the events of Edsa are told, refracting history through their viewpoints and biases, shaping our perceptions and perhaps even our memories.

On the other extreme, other books sought to tell the story of Edsa by using the voices of the "little people," ordinary citizens who provided the "people power" on those four days. Collating anecdotes, diary entries, first-person accounts and letters, the books give us the story from the ground up, providing multiple points of view from which we could piece together the entire tale.

* * *

THE GAP in the narrative lies in the stories the people profiled in "Heroes" tell. They are significant political personages who helped guide the central Edsa figures through the decisions that led to the turning point. They were eyewitnesses to history who were not content to just watch events unfold but sought to influence it in whatever way they could. They are otherwise ordinary folk who seized the opportunity or rose to the challenge, even if it meant sacrificing their safety and their lives.

Most of all, as Fr. Carmelo Caluag writes in his Afterword, they are people who made choices: "choices people made, choices that led to the heroic because they created something larger than themselves, a story larger than life."

Jaime Bengzon, profiling his father Alran, explains what the book is all about: "What became evident was that, ironically, the people about whom he had the greatest reservations—those who didn't know him or of his role in Edsa, and those who didn't know of Edsa at all—were precisely the people for whom my father's story, indeed this whole book, has real value. At its heart Edsa occurred not because of the people who are now considered the major players. It happened because of ordinary citizens, people who became reluctant heroes. People like my father..."

Writing of Linda Kapunan and the other computer programmers whose walkout from the Comelec count bolstered popular perception that the election results had been rigged, Sylvia Mayuga quotes Linda on how they rose to the occasion: "Any basically decent person would have done the same thing."

* * *

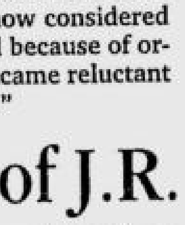
ANOTHER value particular to "Heroes" is the back story to Edsa. As the profiles of Salonga, Rodrigo, Tañada, et al. make clear, the road to Edsa was paved years, decades before the uprising. The foundation was laid by these statesmen who cut their teeth on the movement for nationalism, who carved their careers on the keystones of integrity and service to nation, who allied with restive youngsters during the martial law years, and who finally joined their personal grief and anger with that of the people after Ninoy Aquino was murdered.

Manuel Quezon III, profiling Jovito Salonga, writes for his generation, "the heirs of the people's victory," who voted for Salonga in his last, valiant try at the presidency and "went down to marginalized defeat with our septuagenarian candidate. But at least, for once in our life, we had no cause to regret our vote."

Sr. Mary John Mananzan, standing in for the hundreds of women religious and varied religious congregations who sent their "marines" out to Edsa, also points out that were it not for the years of organizing and protesting work among the sisters during the anti-dictatorship struggle, the nuns would not have been as visible then or now. Without the sisters' previous exposure to and immersion in the struggles of the poor and dispossessed, she says, "even if the Pope had made the call, they would not have heeded it."

What the figures in "Heroes" tell us, then, is that heroism may emerge from a moment of grace and tension, the few seconds in which one has to make up one's mind, draw one's breath, and steel one's nerves. But without a lifetime of making choices—painful, difficult, reluctant and unwanted as these may have been—the moment of heroism would have simply passed them by.

The legend of J.R.



LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

URBAN LEGENDS IN PHILIPPINE HISTORY fascinate me. While some people search for the "White Lady" of Balete Drive or Robina Gokongwei's "Snake Twin" lurking in department store dressing rooms, I try to find the elusive "Kapre" that lives in an ancient mango tree near the Emilio Aguinaldo house in Kawit or Andres Bonifacio's love child from a place aptly named Libog (now Sto. Domingo) in Albay. It was thus stupid of me to presume that the most incredible Rizal urban legend was that he was the father of Adolf Hitler, the result of an indiscretion with a prostitute in Vienna. The most current urban legend is that Rizal is Jack the Ripper!

Textbook history tells us that Rizal was in London from May 1888 to January 1889, in the British Library copying "Sucesos de las islas Filipinas" by hand because there were no photocopying machines at the time. Jack the Ripper was active around this time, and since we do now know what Rizal did at night or on the days he was not in the library, some people would like to believe Rizal is suspect. They argue that when Rizal left London, the Ripper murders stopped. They say that Jack the Ripper must have had some medical training, based on the way his victims were mutilated. Rizal, of course, was a doctor. Jack the Ripper liked women, and so did our own Rizal. And, this is so obvious that it is overlooked by many, Jose Rizal's initials match those of Jack the Ripper!

For someone who wrote a great deal on the most ordinary things, Rizal only made passing reference to Jack the Ripper in an essay on the Guardia Civil he wrote in the April 30, 1890 issue of La Solidaridad. Can this be added to the flimsy but growing list of circumstantial evidence to make Rizal a suspect?

If you open the Jack the Ripper website, you will find Rizal's name on the long list of suspects. There is even a forum dedicated to Rizal, begun by a certain "Amateursleuth" who signs in allegedly from Canada and signs the postings "Karen." Her first posting lists the following data:

"In 1888, he was staying with the Beckett family at 37 Chalcot Crescent in Camden [London]; He was a doctor (ophthalmologist); He was good with weapons (was called 'the swordsman'); He was a Malay; He was proficient in the martial arts; He would have been 27 at the time of the Ripper killings; He was short, had dark skin, dark hair, and dark eyes; He came from a well to do family, was well dressed and looked respectable; He came to London on May 24, 1888 on the ship City of Rome; He left London in January of 1889, and the Ripper killings stopped; He was multitalented (could speak many languages, was a writer, poet, author, sculptor, artist); He was executed in the Philippines on December 30, 1896 at the age of 35; Had a romantic relationship with Gertrude Beckett—the daughter of Charles Beckett; He wrote letters to his friend Blumentritt from London, however there were no letters written to his family or friends from July 1888-Nov. 14, 1888; After he died, his mother tried to procure his assets which consisted of some pretty nice jewelry, including gold cuff links and other baubles of diamonds and amethysts (gold chain with a red stone seal?); I think this man warrants further investigation, which I intend to do."

She provided a photo of Rizal from an Argentinian website leading a certain Glenn Andersson, writer and historian, to remark:

"An interesting character; good luck with the research and come back with more when you can. With such South American features, I doubt that he fits in well with the possible sightings, but then on the other hand, we can't be sure that any of those witnesses saw the Ripper anyway. After all, foreign suspects from those parts were under investigation by the police at the time."

Then somebody remarked that Rizal was in Paris at the time one of the victims, Annie Chapman, was cut up leading "Karen" to reply:

"OK, maybe he didn't kill Annie Chapman, but he had a friend called Dr. Antonio Regidor who could have killed her. Rizal stayed with him in London prior to moving in with the Becketts. Dr. Regidor was also from Manila. They were quite close."

It was also noted that one of the Ripper victims was buried in the same cemetery where Regidor and his family presently lie in peace. Karen later added:

"Since Dr. Rizal was in Paris between Sept. 4 and Sept. 10, 1888, it is therefore impossible for him to have killed Annie Chapman. However, after some digging, I discovered that Rizal had a good friend named Dr. Reinhold Rost who lived approximately 1 block from the Becketts' at 1 Elsworthy Terrace, Camden."

The most incredible piece of information—and absolutely untrustworthy—is that some time in January 1986, the present owners of the London apartment Rizal stayed in discovered a trunk in their attic that contained a diary where Rizal confesses to the Whitechapel murders and a glass jar with half a human kidney preserved in alcohol!

All these tales are ridiculous, but in life and death Rizal continues to fascinate, and tales continue to be spun around him, keeping him current and interesting a century after his execution.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Gaia

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

WHENEVER WE HAVE A DISASTER, LIKE THE LANDSLIDE in Southern Leyte, we hear environmentalists warning us that the tragedies are nature's way of getting back at us for our excesses.

That metaphor of a spiteful nature is a powerful one, and is intended to get people to be more respectful of nature, but I'd question it for two reasons. First, this view of nature makes us look at her with too much fear, sometimes to the point of seeing her as an adversary. Second, this view isn't scientific at all.

Living much more closely with nature, our ancestors developed animist beliefs that mixed respect and fear. Our ancestors believed we were surrounded by spirits, both benevolent and malevolent, each with their own territories, from anthills and trees to entire mountains. The response tended to be one of avoiding places that were unfamiliar and remote, lest spirits there be angered.

These animist views remain strong in this 21st century. Drive down any major highway, and you're bound to suddenly find a tree in the middle. Ask around and you're sure to hear that construction workers refused to cut down the tree because they believed it had occupants. Many of the stories will include accounts of accidents, even deaths, among the construction crew as they tried to build the highway.

These practices remain widespread, even in cities. Architects and contractors routinely sacrifice chickens before construction or renovation, and acknowledge that they do this more for the peace of mind of the workers, burly macho types who fear the spirits of the place.

Modernity

Paradoxically, while we avoid or step aside in deference to nature, our fear also sometimes drives us to another extreme of trying to obliterate nature.

We see modernity and technology as ways of taming, even conquering nature. I've seen so many homes with huge lots, but without a garden, concrete poured to cover every inch of soil, every last reminder of nature.

One of my biggest frustrations organizing conferences and workshops in the Philippines has been the lack of hotels that have retained some view of nature. Last year when I was organizing an international meeting, I realized, with sadness, that most of the best hotels along Roxas Boulevard do not have a single function room with a view of Manila Bay! I was also hard pressed to find rooms with a view of trees or at least gardens. One hotel manager told me that this was intentional, to keep the participants from getting distracted by the outside world (read: nature).

Fear puts us in an adversarial relationship with nature. Anything undomesticated—plants or animals—are seen as dangerous. Even at UP, where people constantly talk about environmental conservation, there are still blind spots. For example, whenever we talk about "modernization" of facilities, the faculty and students immediately propose air-conditioned rooms. The windowless malls, hotels, offices and classrooms represent our attempts to conquer nature.

Gaia

Until disaster strikes. . .and we once again acknowledge the power of nature and talk about respecting nature. At least for the short-term, the fear factor works.

We need alternative views of nature that go beyond fear. I'm thinking of the Gaia hypothesis, named after the Greek goddess of the earth and first systematically proposed by the atmospheric chemist James Lovelock and biologist Lynn Margulis in 1979. Put simply, the Gaia hypothesis views all of nature as one living organism that maintains conditions necessary for its survival. The planet earth can therefore be seen as one living organism (or even as one cell, according to the biologist Lewis Thomas), within which all life is locked into each other in self-regulating cycles.

First dismissed as romanticist and unrealistic, the Gaia hypothesis has since gained more adherents as scientists realized the hypothesis was quite powerful in helping to predict scenarios for the future.

Some of the attempted predictions can be quite complicated. For example, what would happen if we continue to deplete the ozone layer as we do today, in terms of temperature change? And for every fraction of one degree of temperature change, what might happen to sea levels, to rainfall and other atmospheric variables? How would these in turn affect food production, disease patterns?

Other predictions are based on common sense, and can be quite localized. Our fishing communities, for example, seem to understand that as their population grows, they get less fish. They begin to understand that natural resources are not infinite, that when you take from the sea and don't give anything back, its resources are depleted. What the fisherfolk may not see though are the other chains of natural reactions that follow the fish depletion: chain reactions that lead to a dwindling of other marine resources besides fish, changes in the sea itself. It's harder to see how the changes in the marine environment will affect all other aspects of life on the planet, on the land, in the atmosphere. Some of the changes will have no effect on human communities, others can be quite dramatic, from landslides to El Niño or La Niña.

The Gaia hypothesis forces us to think in terms of systems, and in the long term. Who would have thought that the conversion of forest lands into coconut plantations in St. Bernard, dating back to the 1920s, would eventually converge with other developments—growing population, the loss of other trees and, finally, the heavy rainfall over the last few weeks—to challenge nature? Nature had to make tough "choices." In this case, she didn't "punish" humans. What she did was to dispense with the mountain, allowing it to fall to the earth where, unfortunately, several thousand people lived.

Each environmental crisis poses new challenges, and using the Gaia hypothesis, we have to be conscious about how our perceived solutions relate to the entire living organism that is the planet.

We see hunger and poverty in our communities, and we think, hey, the solution is "development." Our national leaders tell us we need the mining companies to create jobs, bring in foreign exchange and lift people out of their poverty. St. Bernard is rich in gold and silver and, in their misery, residents may actually welcome the companies into their area without thinking of what the mining operations might mean in the long term.

When the environment comes under pressure, humans are actually quite dispensable. After all, we've only been around about 100,000 years on a planet that's had life forms for about 3 billion years. We are the greatest sources of stress for the planet, and yet we are really quite inessential to its survival in the long run.

The Gaia hypothesis suggests that we work with nature, understanding that when we take something from the planet, we need to return something. Ultimately it's our choices that create the conditions for our own survival, or extinction.

America and global warming

I ALMOST FELL OFF MY SEAT UPon reading the headline "Gore: Earth is now at risk, Let's save it." (PDI, 2/10/04)

At my kindest, I can say the statement constituted the height of hypocrisy, Orwellian double talk, at its worst.

While I appreciate the former US vice president's concern for domestic environmental conservation and ecological balance, I think it would serve him well if he delivers that message to current US President George W. Bush who, to date, still refuses to sign the Kyoto Protocol, which is aimed at addressing global warming, the very phenomenon that Gore wishes to combat. Gore, when he was still the vice president already known for his environmental advocacy, could have convinced then US President Bill Clinton to sign the Kyoto Protocol. But he chose not to for reasons that he alone knows.

And suddenly before a captive audience of political leaders, businessmen and members of the diplomatic corps, he now sees the need for a global consensus to combat global warming, a phenomenon that his country refuses to address by its continued refusal to accede to the Kyoto Protocol.

The fact is, the United States and Canada contribute to global warming more than any other country in the world. Not even China or India can approximate the United States' contribution to global warming. Canada has signed the Kyoto Protocol.

Why does the United States refuse to sign the "Kyoto Agreement on Climate Change"? Because of an influential corporate lobby. This means, more than sustainable environmental protection at the global level, the paramount consideration of inefficient US industries is the profit margins in a US-dominated global free trade. The United States knows that most of the greenhouse gas emission that causes global warming comes from inefficient US industries. In hindsight, Clinton now believes the United States should have signed the Kyoto Protocol.

The United States—more than the developing countries, whose contribution to global warming is negligible—should shoulder the bulk of the burden in the effort to arrest global warming. But it refuses to do so. It refuses to sign the Kyoto Protocol because of the power of corporate America to dictate on the US government, be it Republican- or Democrat-dominated.

—LEVI B. BUENAVENTURA,
Office of Sen. Kiko Pangilinan,
Rm 603, Philippine Senate,
GSIS Building, Pasay City

Strengthen Charter mechanism for fighting graft

IN THEIR HASTE TO CHANGE the Constitution, advocates spelled out seven core proposals. None of these proposed amendments, however, seeks to strengthen the constitutional mechanism for fighting graft and corruption.

Under our present Constitution, the Ombudsman, which initially takes cognizance of complaints against corrupt government officials and employees, is a constitutional body; on the other hand, the Sandiganbayan, which has jurisdiction over all the cases that the Ombudsman may file, is not. The Constitution provides for but does not create the Sandiganbayan (Nuñez vs. Sandiganbayan 111 SCRA 438). The Ombudsman is removable only by impeachment and his office has fiscal autonomy. The Sandiganbayan has no fiscal autonomy and its justices are removable like any ordinary judge or justice of the Court of Appeals.

The proposed Charter change should make the Sandiganbayan a constitutional creature, at par with the Ombudsman. Thus, the justices of the Sandiganbayan will be able to discharge their duties free from any sort of pressure or harassment. And thus, it will not be easy to undermine the independence, impartiality and efficiency of the Sandiganbayan justices.

To ensure the independence of the Commission on Elections, Commission on Audit and Civil Service Commission, the Constitution provides for their creation. Why not the Sandiganbayan, too, considering that its functions are equally sensitive as, if not more significant than, the above-mentioned constitutional bodies?

Finally, in order to give Sandiganbayan justices the prestige and honor they fittingly deserve as guardians of morality and integrity in public service, they should be given a rank and salary higher than those of the Court of Appeals. In other words, in the hierarchy of courts, the Sandiganbayan should be second only to the Supreme Court.

Any amendment as to the form of government will be an exercise in futility if we will not provide in the new Constitution the necessary ways and measures to establish and maintain a government that is efficient, honest, clean and impervious to graft and corruption.

If we look back at history—into the experiences of ancient Greece, Rome and China, to mention a few—we will sure see that corruption has been the cause of the disorganization and breakdown of societies, ultimately leading to the violent overthrow of the ruling power. Certainly, we do not relish the thought that the Philippines will be remembered in history for such an experience.

—MANUEL R. PAMARAN,
former presiding justice,
Sandiganbayan

'Undemocratic hatred' and religious fanaticism

CONRADO DE QUIROS OFFERS the right approach to Muslim uproar over the "Mohammed cartoons" (PDI, 2/14/06): Stand firm, don't give up an inch. Freedom of speech has to be defended ideally and absolutely. To give in even just a little to "undemocratic hatred" (there is democratic hatred, of course!) is to make democracy (and freedom of speech) more vulnerable to fanaticism.

Democracy assumes that we do not know everything there is to know; contrast that to religious belief.

Anyway, the proper document for this is the US law on religious defamation. Do the Danish cartoons defame, inspire hatred and prejudice against Muslims and Islam? To some degree, perhaps. But in US courts, they would merit just a few dollars from the offending party.

—BRIAN BROTARLO,
arv_brotarlo_05@yahoo.com

House award is not fake

INQUIRER COLUMNIST NEAL Cruz's allegation that the Congressional Medal of Achievement award is "fake" is a highly unethical attack on the House of Representatives, based on wrong information. (PDI, 2/20/06)

The House and its speaker do not give out "fake awards." The award Cruz impugned was instituted on Nov. 18, 2002 during the Second Regular Session of the 12th Congress through House Resolution No. 453, titled "Instituting A Congressional Medal of Achievement to enable the House of Representatives to Honor Political, Economic and Cultural Leaders Who Have Distinguished Themselves Through Their Life-Work and Vision."

Had Cruz opted to be more thorough by verifying his information, he could have obtained from our office a copy of Resolution No. 453.

To attempt to picture the Congressional Medal of Achievement as "fake" is an unwarranted disservice to the distinguished men and women who have received it and to the institution that bestows it.

The award is manifestly a House award. That being so, there is no need for the Senate to approve or adopt it. One final point: this does not bar the Senate from initiating its own award if the chamber so desires.

On three occasions, even Senate President Franklin Drilon was witness to the award ceremonies—when Speaker Jose de Venecia presented the award to three Asian political luminaries before they addressed the Joint Session of the Philippine Congress: President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan and President Hu Jintao of China in April last year, and President Kalam of India early this month.

As a faithful reader of the Inquirer, I expect its opinion writers to be, at the very least, factual and fair.

—ROBERTO P. NAZARENO,
secretary general,
House of Representatives,
National Government Center,
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

Against Crew's mining project

THIS IS A REACTION TO THE Talk of the Town section last Feb. 5.

In behalf of the stakeholder communities of Mindoro, I would like to present our real objections to the mining project of Crew-Philippines:

1. It is true that "there had been calls to block Aglubang Mining Corporation and Crew." But these have been persistently going on even before the disastrous floods that struck Calapan City and its neighboring towns last December 2006. In fact, the opposition to the project is overwhelming, coming not only from the Church, indigenous peoples and civil society but also from elected officials and *sanggunians* (councils) of the affected municipalities and city. Way back in January 2002, a provincial ordinance declared a 25-year mining moratorium in the province.

2. The reason for opposing the project stems not from any speculation but from the fact that the mining concession is inside the province's critical watershed. Strip mining poses the risks of erosion, flooding, degradation of agricultural lands, loss of biodiversity, etc. This is mentioned in the pre-feasibility studies conducted by Kvaerner Metals, which was commissioned by the mining company itself.

3. The claim that mining will make Mindoro "one of the richest provinces in the country" is ludicrous considering the destruction that mining will cause to the environment. Former Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez himself said: "What does it gain a nation to be short-sighted and merely think of money when an irreparable damage to the environment will cost human lives, health and livelihood capacity of our farmers and fisherfolks, endangering the food security of our people?"

4. Crew professes that it treats the indigenous peoples equally and promises them great benefits. But what it fails to declare is that 9,720 hectares covered by its application is inside the ancestral domains of the Alangan and Tadyawan Mangyans. What is more deplorable is the way a group of Mangyans has been manipulated to allow the company to project a façade of acceptability. But the fact is that Crew's entry to the Mangyan ancestral lands constitutes large-scale landgrabbing.

5. Lastly, the claim that the Philippines has 25 percent of the world's nickel reserves is grossly misleading and needs to be substantiated.

With all the hullabaloo about mining as the "ticket to progress," we are more inclined to believe the CBCP's position that "the promised economic benefits of mining by the transnational corporations are outweighed by the dislocation of communities, especially among our indigenous brothers and sisters, and the risks to health and livelihood and massive environmental damage."

—FR. EDWIN A. GARIGUEZ,
Bishop's Residence, Calapan City

SC's vow: signal or condition?

"SC VOWS NO INTERFERENCE IN economic policies." (PDI, 2/17/06) The vow was made by new Supreme Court Chief Justice Artemio V. Panganiban before businessmen, including leaders of foreign chambers of commerce. Earlier, on Feb. 8, at the Manila Polo Club, Panganiban made the same vow before the Philippine Constitution Association.

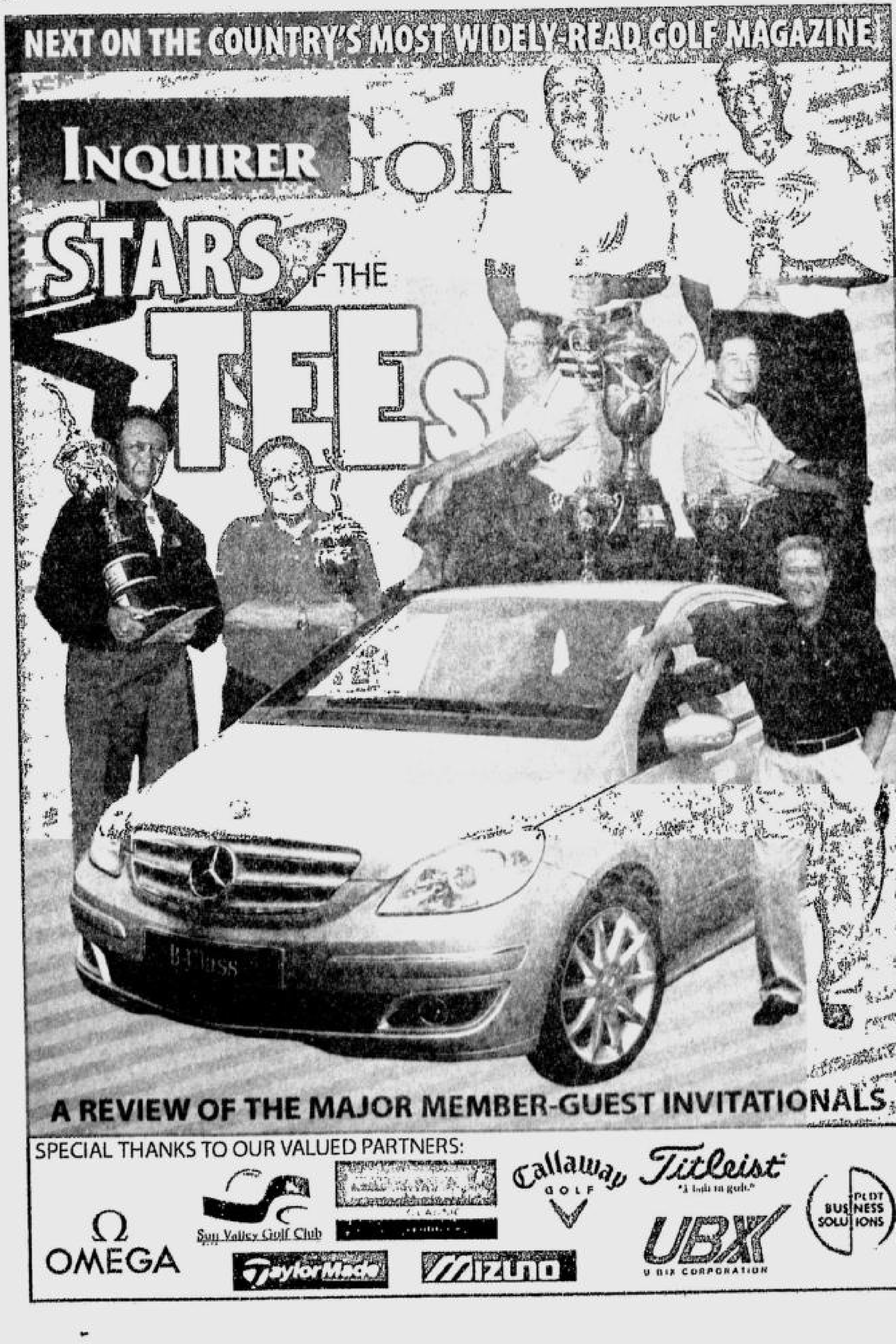
Is the vow an advance notice that, under Panganiban's watch, it is pointless for aggrieved Filipinos to question before the Supreme Court economic policies implementing the conditions attached by the World Bank, the International Monetary Bank and the World Trade Organization upon our foreign debts?

Most of these debt conditions, if not all, circumvent or violate outright the nationalist provisions of the Constitution which gives Filipinos special rights to our natural resources, public utilities, the professions, educational institutions, mass media and advertising.

Or is Panganiban's pledge one of the conditions attached to the loans and grants obtained by the Supreme Court from the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the European Community, the Canadian Agency for International Development and the Australian Agency for International Development?

Is Panganiban's pledge a signal to the agents of globalization in Malacañang and Congress that, under his watch, they may liberalize, deregulate and privatize the playing field in the Philippines for the benefit of transnational corporations, without fear of judicial interference?

—AMADO GAT INCIONG,
145 15th Avenue, Cubao, QC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A REVIEW OF THE MAJOR MEMBER-GUEST INVITATIONALS
SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR VALUED PARTNERS:

The turtle racing against onrushing tide of poverty

ONE OF THE MOST APPLAUDED LINES IN President Macapagal-Arroyo's 2005 State of the Nation Address was her claim that the Philippine economy, after attaining a 2004 GDP growth rate of more than 6 percent, was "poised for takeoff." Last Jan. 30, the National Statistics Coordination Board announced a growth rate of 5.1 percent in 2005.

Even if we accept the government figure of a 5.1 percent GDP growth for 2005, it certainly did not indicate a "takeoff." In fact, it showed an economic "plunge"—down from a 6.1 percent growth claimed in 2004. An almost 1-percent decline in GDP growth is enormous in absolute amounts.

Also, Filipinos should understand that, on the basis of historical experience, a country can only "take off" from underdevelopment if it is able to maintain an average of no less than 7 percent for two to three decades. Much more so in the case of the Philippines, which has an average population growth rate of 2.3 percent.

In his "747" economic program, Speaker Jose de Venecia pushes for a growth rate of 7 percent for at least seven years as a basis for takeoff. An IMF working paper ("Poverty, Income Distribution and Economic Policy in the Philippines," 1988) tracked the average GDP growth of selected Asian countries in 1970-95 (25 years) as follows: Korea, 8-9 percent; Malaysia, 7-8 percent; Thailand, more than 7 percent; Indonesia, 7 percent; and the Philippines, a measly 2.8 percent. This shows why the Philippines has been left behind in the race for economic progress in Asia, and why neighboring countries, like Malaysia and Korea (not to mention China with average growth rates of 9-10 percent), have taken off to become NICs (newly industrialized countries). The paper explained that the poor growth performance of the Philippines is also the cause of its failure to reduce poverty, now at 40 percent, according to the Development Bank of the Philippines.

Sen. Mar Roxas says that blockages in the economy prevent production gains from trickling down to the poor and that a less-than-3-percent net GDP growth was negative for the masses. Among these blockages are: the highly inequitable distribution of income, the diversion of a substantial portion of government revenue (more than 30 percent of the national budget) to debt payment, and our growing dependence on exports.

Government and mainstream Filipino economists, eager to please whomsoever is in power, hail each dismal gain in economic growth as a great advance. They are like a land turtle with a poor eyesight which, because it is able to take painfully slow steps, thinks it is outpacing the advancing tide that would drag it to the deep. In loudly proclaiming progress where there is none, while continuing to pursue the same economic policies of the past 45 years, our government officials are making it inevitable for the onrushing tide of poverty to drag our people down to the swirling depths of desperation and revolution.

—MANUEL F. ALMARIO,
mfalmario@yahoo.com

GSIS' insensitivity to elderly pensioners

AS ONE OF THE CONCERNED RETIREE-pensioners, I write this letter to call attention to the problems which beset regular pensioners who have enrolled at the Government Service Insurance System's field center, as required by Winston F. Garcia, to secure an E-card.

Although we are against the imposition, as good followers, we obeyed first before complaining. I would like to make it clear: We pensioners enrolled not because we wanted to comply with Garcia's requirement but because we feared losing our monthly pensions for non-compliance. That would have meant being deprived of food and medicines. (We were given a time-frame within which to comply with Garcia's order; otherwise, our pensions will be withheld or delayed.)

Most pensioners dislike the E-card policy because they are old, with impaired vision and hearing; thus the E-card is no longer practical and compatible for them.

It is more convenient for the pensioners to get their pensions in checks delivered at their homes, because then they can just sign them either for endorsement or encashment. They don't have to travel anymore to an ATM machine to get their pensions.

The measly 3-percent increase (effective January 2006) in the pensions of retiree-pensioners, most of whom are living in poverty and deprivation, was an insult to them. It showed that Garcia regards GSIS pensioners as beggars. How can these pensioners be lifted out of their misery with that 3-percent increase, especially at this time of economic crisis? Garcia is a callous human being without emotion and no sympathy for elderly people in the sunset of their lives.

—ANTONIO B. BORJA,
23 G. Del Pilar St.,
Dayangdang, Naga City 4400

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Phivolcs raises alert level in Mayon

LEGAZPI CITY—AUTHORITIES RAISED THE ALERT level around Mayon to 2 after the volcano emitted ash that was preceded by a series of weak earthquakes.

Ed Laguerta, Bicol director of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs), said the volcano spewed ash 500 meters high from its crater.

The Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council said the alert level meant that no one should stray into a 6-km radius around the volcano that was delineated as a permanent danger zone.

The small explosion deposited ash in the upper slopes of the volcano, a Phivolcs bulletin said.

It said more explosions could occur in the next few days as magma rises and releases gas inside the volcano.

Laguerta said a team from Manila would arrive today to fix the seismic sensors installed at the foot of the volcano.

"What happened today was just a minor explosion," he said.

Laguerta said the Phivolcs is watching out for these other signs of a possible eruption—swelling of the volcano's dome, intense crater glow and increase in the emission of ash.

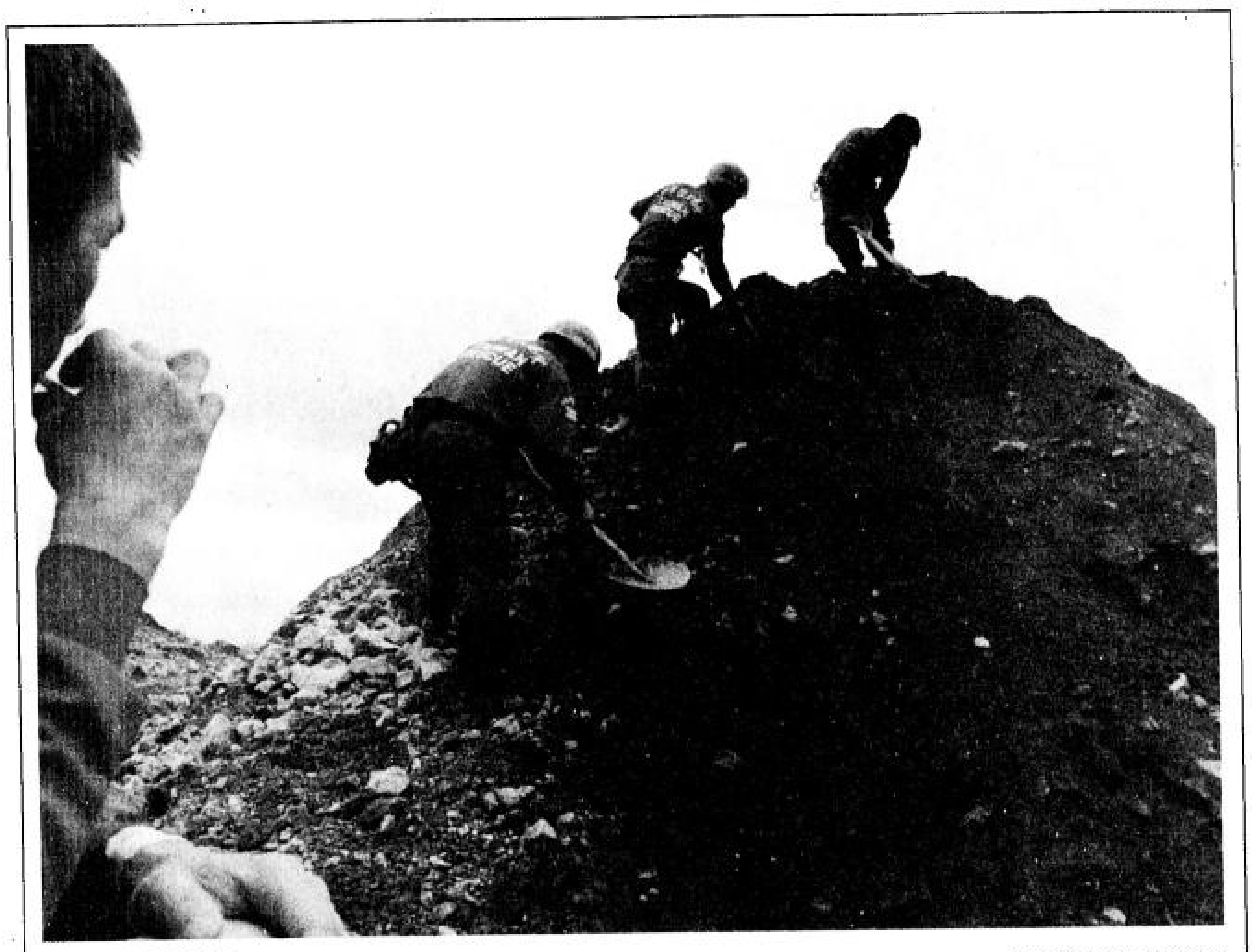
The Phivolcs, he said, requested for a helicopter from the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) to be used by a Phivolcs team to take a closer look at Mayon in an aerial survey.

The OCD said it was closely coordinating with Phivolcs to monitor the volcano's condition and alert people as soon as it shows signs of erupting.

It said village councils were told to prepare for a possible eruption and put their disaster preparedness plans in place.

"But there is no reason for the people to panic at this point in time," Laguerta said.

The OCD said should Mayon erupt, or continue showing signs of erupting, it was prepared to evacuate people and bring them to safety. *Joanna Los Baños, with a report from Gil Francis Arevalo, PDI S. Luzon Bureau*



EDWIN BACASMAS/PDI PHOTO

FOREIGN AID
Members of a Taiwanese rescue team try to dig through at least 100 feet of mud and boulders in the hope of finding survivors in a mudslide that erased the entire village of Guinsaugon in St. Bernard, Southern Leyte.

Moms of 11 backpackers seek release of kids tagged by cops as guerrillas

BAGUIO CITY—THE MOTHERS OF 11 BACKpackers, who were linked by the police and military to the Feb. 10 raid of an Army detachment in Benguet, on Tuesday called on the government to release their children following reports that they were maltreated while in detention.

The backpackers, whose ages range from 15 to 24, were arrested at a police checkpoint in Barangay Bangao in Buguias, Benguet, on Feb. 14 while they were on their way to Sagada, Mt. Province.

Police said they were members of a New People's Army unit that raided an Army detachment in Mankayan, Benguet on Feb. 10. Two soldiers and a government militiaman were killed in that attack.

The mother of a 15-year-old suspect said her daughter would cry whenever she recalled the abuse she underwent. She said her daughter saw how her male companions were tortured.

She said her daughter was the only woman among the group. The suspects are members of a punk rock group who performed earlier at a music festival in Gerona, Tarlac, the INQUIRER learned.

"My daughter was kicked and her face was covered with three layers of plastic. The police were forcing her to admit that she is an NPA rebel," the mother said during a press briefing.

The suspects' relatives said the group, after a performance in Gerona, went to Baguio and Sagada.

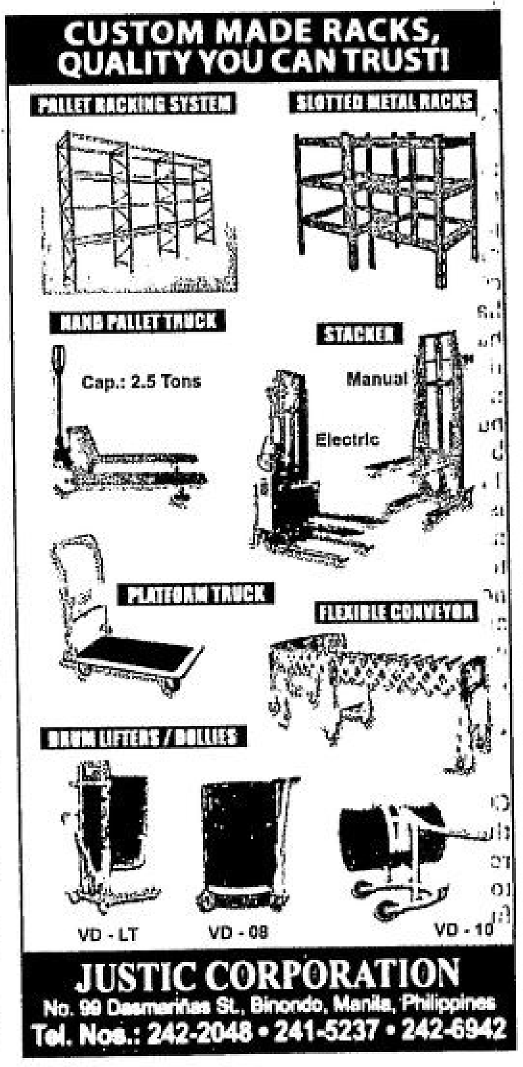
Flordeliza Mañosa, mother of Aldus Christian Mañosa, 18, said she saw her son's bruises at the Benguet provincial jail last week.

But Senior Supt. Alexander Pumecha, spokesperson of the Cordillera police, said the backpackers were not tortured.

Police charged them with robbery with homicide in connection with the raid on the Army detachment where 23 firearms were taken.

Rundren Berloiz Lao, 24, one of the suspects, escaped and asked help from the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

It was through Lao that the parents learned of their children's fate. *Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*



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ROUNDUP

Suspicious planes

ILAGAN, Isabela—Private planes, without markings and flying at low altitudes, have been spotted in coastal towns in Isabela for the past months, raising suspicion that these have been delivering illegal goods via the Pacific Ocean, a police official said. Isabela police director Senior Supt. Percival Barba said the airplanes have been suspected of unloading contraband such as firearms or prohibited drugs in the coastal towns of Palanan, Divilacan, Dinapigue and Maconacon. Except for Dinapigue, the coastal towns are accessible only by plane or boat or a long hike.

Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

3 held for car theft

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Three suspected members of a car theft syndicate, including a minor, were arrested in separate police operations in Batangas City on Feb. 18. Police said a certain Potenciana Tejada accused a 17-year-old boy of taking her tricycle in front of her house in Bauan town. An hour later, police arrested the minor while he drove the tricycle. The minor later identified two men as the leaders of his group. Police arrested the two in a hideout. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Car thief killed

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—A traffic enforcer and suspected car thief, who was allegedly behind the killing of a nursing student in Parañaque, was killed while his four other companions were arrested in a clash with police on Feb. 14 in Sto. Tomas, La Union. Police said the slain suspect, Esteven Liwanag, and four other suspects were behind the killing of Richard Capili, a 19-year-old nursing student, who was shot dead by three men who also took his Toyota Revo (WRY 883) in BF Homes, Parañaque on Feb. 12.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Computer program blamed

NAGA CITY—A manager of the Government Service Insurance System blamed the incompatibility of the Department of Education's electronic remittance file program with that used by the agency as the reason for the surcharges it imposes on the teachers' loan payments. Marina Mallari, GSIS branch manager here, said the incompatible accounting program delays the posting of the teachers' remittances. As a result, "we have to repeat the same process all over again once the loan payments of teachers are submitted to us," Mallari added. The teachers have been complaining of surcharges on their GSIS loans because of delayed payments.

Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CORON CHALLENGE
A set of stairs, with 717 steps and which rises to 2,000 feet above sea level, would be part of a race in April in Coron, Palawan dubbed as the Mt. Tapyas Extra Challenge. For inquiries, call Tess Dono at 09192524685.

Giant snails destroy crops in Surigao Sur

TANDAG, SURIGAO del Sur—Hundreds of hectares of rice farms in the province were flattened in what officials described was an invasion of giant snails.

The provincial agriculture office said the infestation was triggered by floods that swept the province and several areas of Caraga.

Marco Quico, provincial agriculturist, said at least 15 towns suffered from the infestation—Barobo, Bayabas, Cagwait, Cantilan, Carmen, Carrascal, Cortes, Lanuza, Lianga, Madrid, Marihatag, San Agustin, San Miguel, Tago and this town.

"In the past years snail infestation of rice lands was very minimal," he said.

Quico said heavy rains in the past three weeks brought the snails out. They are normally dormant during the dry season.

"We have to replenish the damaged plants or there will be a shortage of rice this year," he said.

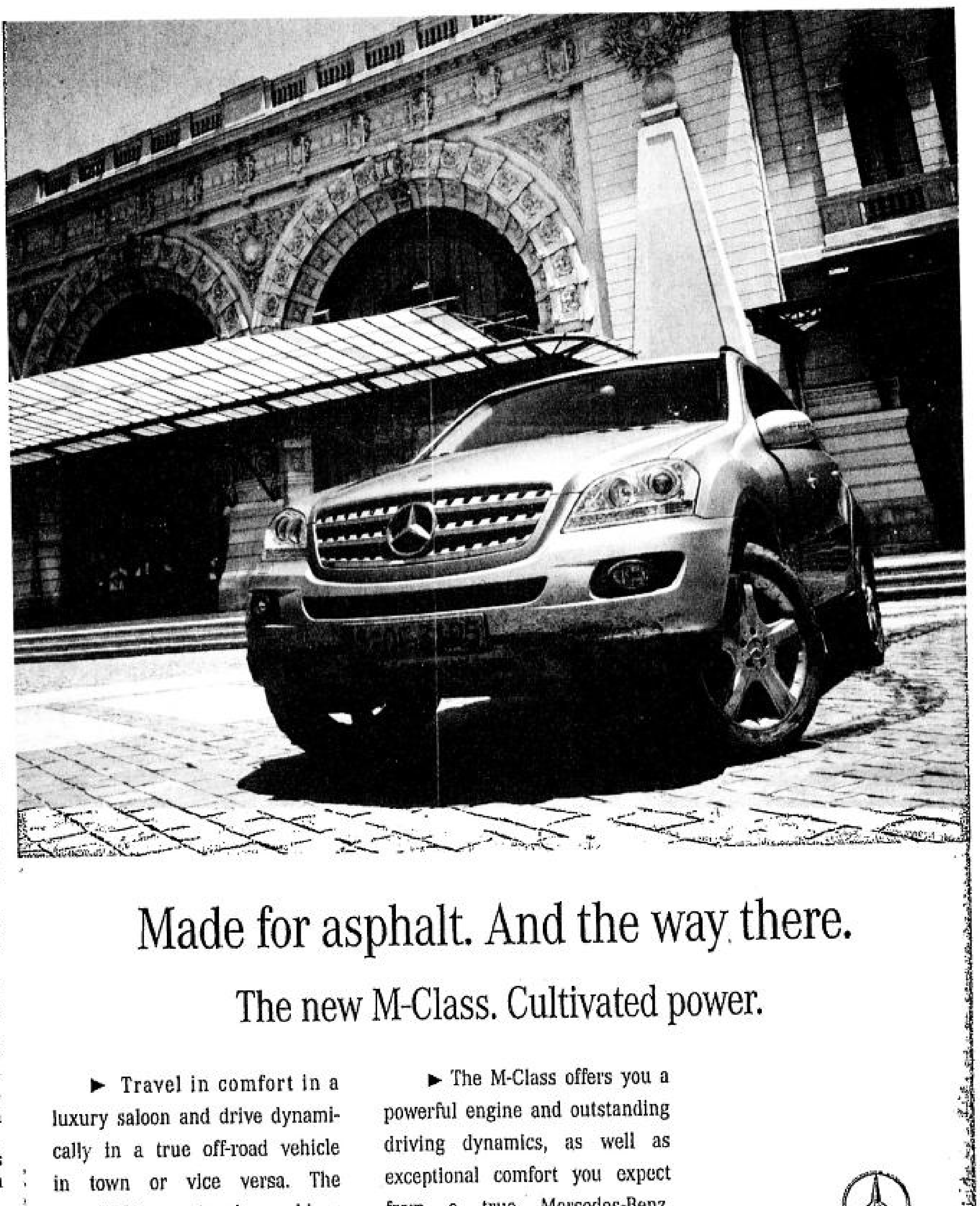
Quico warned of a price increase in case of a shortage.

He said he requested for rice seeds to be given to farmers.

Quico also urged farmers to help remove the snails manually, put them in sacks and burn them.

The golden snail is a native of South America.

It was introduced into the country by the Marcos regime in the 1980s to boost food security and provide an alternative source of protein. *Bert Pacate, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



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INQUIRER *Northern Luzon*

PMA 'Edsa' class recalls passion for change

MEMBERS of the PMA Sinagtala Class of 1986 join the alumni parade during their homecoming on Saturday at Fort del Pilar in Baguio City. The class is the first batch of PMA graduates that former President Corazon Aquino addressed after she assumed power following the Edsa revolt. This photo has been flipped.

VINCENT CABREZA

By Vincent Cabreza
Fort del Pilar, Baguio City

THEY WERE THE FIRST cadets to graduate on the heels of a revolution, and members of the Philippine Military Academy "Sinagtala" Class of 1986 celebrated that milestone on Feb. 18 during the PMA homecoming that was shadowed by a coup plot.

Senior Supt. Jose Ma. Victor Ramos, class president, said Sinagtala was already convinced that the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos had too much power when they were suddenly informed that people had started to mass up at Edsa on Feb. 23, 1986.

"We were the first class (senior) cadets at the time … we were worried [when former Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile, former Constabulary chief Fidel Ramos, then Col. Gregorio Honasan and the Reform the Armed Forces Movement seized Camp Aguinaldo]," he said.

"We were graduating and we were due for deployment to the field. We did not know where we would be assigned because we knew the leadership was about to change. Of course, we were supportive of the call to oust Marcos because he had too much power," Ramos said in Filipino.

He said all 174 Sinagtala members never discussed their sentiments in public because they were immediately ordered to stay in their barracks.

But their lives changed due to the 1986 Edsa Revolution.

Ramos said they were the first cadets to shake the hands of a female commander in chief, former President Corazon Aquino, when they graduated a month after the revolt.

He said their careers also took a strange turn. "I joined the Army [prior to graduation]. Then immediately after the revolution, they increased the quota [or the number of graduating cadet deployment] of the Philippine Constabulary which became the Philippine National Police, and the quota of the Philippine Navy, so I joined the police," Ramos said. He is assigned to the PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG).

Changes

These were changes that few people even acknowledged anymore.

Col. Archimedes Viaje, a Sinagtala member, said the class was surprised that reporters covering last Saturday's PMA homecoming failed to interview them about the Edsa I Revolt, which is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year.

"Perhaps people now tend to forget," Viaje said.

Many of his classmates are counting their blessings.

The revolt's 20th anniversary is clouded by mass unrest and persistent rumors about a military uprising because some of the gains people expected from Edsa have yet to materialize 20 years later.

"We keep our idealism, but there are still many complaints. 'Why was he promoted, and we were not?' 'Why is this officer assigned here when we can't?' At this point in the organization, even if we are promoted to senior superintendent (equivalent to colonel in the military), we are stuck because they still consider us too young to be promoted," Ramos said in Filipino.

Sinagtala members were among the alumni members who applauded Karina Constantino David, chair of the Civil Service Commission, when she called for a "strong and legitimate political system that makes military intervention unnecessary; [a system] that allows the military to simply become a professional corps."

Like most of the academy's idealistic graduates, Ramos said his mistah had also overcome their romantic attachments to the revolution.

This, he said, had made them invulnerable to a reported recruitment drive for military reformists.

Always in the right

He said the Sinagtala members adhere to a governing principle that is "always in the right, and [is] always legal."

"Whatever influence RAM or Honasan had on cadets after Edsa had since condensed into a more pragmatic, if righteous, outlook," he said.

This is because the figures of the revolution have also learned to move on.

Retired Navy Capt. Proceso Maligalig, RAM spokesperson, said the former rebel group has turned into a foundation that helps its members get employment or some measure of justice from the system.

Many of them were cashiered without receiving pensions, or are still facing criminal charges because they were politically excluded from a government amnesty program for mounting a series of coup in the late 1980s, Maligalig said.

"We learned a better way," he said.

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THE PEOPLE

An invitation to the world's biggest party

By **Ricardo R. Braganza M.D.**

After hearing Cardinal Sin's voice all over the airwaves, some groups in our hospital immediately started organizing interested staff members to go to Edsa. The response was spontaneous, but I could not tell if our enthusiasm was due to a desire to provide help as medical teams or simply to be one with the thousands who saw hope that Marcos' rule would finally end.

It was like being invited to the biggest party in the world. The sight of large numbers of people going to Edsa was overwhelming. I do not remember who were with me except that we were in several cars and vans, including people who asked to hitch a ride to Edsa.

When we got there, we mingled with the crowds and were happy to see lots of friends. One could move around freely and give or take food or whatever one could offer. There was no fear at all of the military men around. The people in Edsa were so happy, and kindness was all around Camp Crame. I was not afraid of helicopters flying overhead or of coming close to the soldiers, many of whom were tired and appreciative of the food being offered.

I spent three whole afternoons in Edsa and would leave only at night. The hours spent there were like holidays for some of us, and patients understood why we were not at our offices. People who remained loyal to Marcos could not seem to understand the ebullience of the Cory supporters. At home and elsewhere, we would talk about what we had seen earlier in the day, such as the sight of nuns and students praying, women approaching soldiers who were total strangers and talking to them like they were family. I pictured people giving food to the soldiers as though they were feeding wild animals that could bite them anytime, yet the soldiers were sweet enough to smile and say thanks. Some would even engage people in small talk. Those responses relieved everyone, and there would be more food, more prayers and more small talk between the civilians and the soldiers. Generosity overflowed.

People from all walks of life were there—professionals, activists, families with their children, the handicapped, actors, socialites, ordinary workers, entrepreneurs selling food and yellow shirts with Ninoy's likeness, and media men from all over the world—just mingling around, exchanging stories or just making each other feel good about just being there.

When the first news reports came that the Marcoses had left Malacañang, my brother, a niece who up to that point had spent all her life at Assumption College and I proceeded to the Palace. No one stopped us. Perhaps because of the euphoria, we did not think of any danger, not even when people began forcing the gates open. We were there when some people entered the Palace and sent sheets of paper flying out a window on an upper floor. We saw picture frames of Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos smashed and stepped upon. We saw Marcos loyalists being hit and at some point being shielded from further harm. Some people were shouting, *"Huwag sirain, 'wag sirain."*

Minutes later, sirens proclaimed the arrival of police cars and other vehicles carrying soldiers. Their arrival gave me a feeling of relief, knowing that the looting and further destruction of Malacañang would be halted. Then we left, and we saw many others were leaving just like us. Many of those who went there were decent people who had come from Edsa and simply wanted to be there during that time in history.

We left Malacañang happy. I felt really good. Somehow a new Filipino in me was born.

THE MILITARY

A cool psywar expert rules the war room

From page A1

One reporter led me to a Volkswagen that turned out to be a Radio Veritas mobile. There, I read my resignation letter live for national broadcast. Officially, I became the first senior government official to break away from Marcos after Enrile and AFP Vice Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Fidel V. Ramos.

On Sunday morning, General Ramos mounted a makeshift stage just outside Camp Crame, and asked me to join him when he saw me in the crowd. I witnessed his virtuoso performance as a psywar expert, announcing the names of people who had defected to his side to boost troop morale.

As the crowd started to build up, a civilian chopper hovered overhead. Ramos quipped, *"Atin yan!* (That's ours!)" to the delight and cheers of the crowd.

In the afternoon, as Marcos' tanks moved toward Ortigas, I got a call from Irwin Ver, a "mistah"—member of the Philippine Military Academy Class of 1970 to which I originally belonged before I went to the US Navy Academy at Annapolis.

"Mistah, why don't we meet somewhere and talk. Please be assured we have no intention of arresting Enrile. We are not maltreating him," said Irwin, chief of the presidential guards and son of Armed Forces Chief of Staff Fabian Ver.

Tanks were just posturing

I replied, "Mistah, compadre (I was one of the baptismal godfathers of Irwin's first-born Bien-Bien), it's too late for that talk now. Why don't you just stop those tanks from moving to prevent bloodshed?"

Irwin said in a very somber tone: "Mistah, those tanks are just posturing. I assure you they will stop." And we ended our Mistah-to-Mistah talk, agreeing that after the episode was over, we would talk over dinner.

In the evening, General Ramos' office was crammed with civilians. One of them was Armida Siguion-Reyna, Minister Enrile's sister, who came with husband Nards and lots of friends. They brought a lot of *siopao*.

Inside the War Room, General Ramos was already receiving a fresh batch of defectors, very young, good-looking lieutenants from the Ranger Regiment. Ramos was announcing this to the media to project a momentum building up against Marcos.

It was very effective. At the same time, he warned his Camp Crame security group about the possible attack of a rabidly pro-Marcos commando group consisting of civilians trained in Tanay under the command of a young politician from the north.

Palace is like a cemetery

I called up a young officer in the Presidential Security Command at the Palace and engaged him in a casual, probing conversation. We were very close to each other, but found ourselves in opposite camps. I told him we were in a festive mood in Crame, had plenty of food. He said it was very quiet in the Palace ("It's like a cemetery here") and not much food.

The highlight of the morning on Feb. 24 was the defection of the Philippine Air Force attack helicopters under Col. Antonio Sotelo. This was followed later by an announcement that Marcos had left already, igniting cheers in the Camp Crame ground (which led to the famous Ramos jump). It was a false alarm. An angry Marcos all of sudden appeared on TV.

It became very tense in the Crame headquarters. Monitored radio conversations of the pro-Marcos forces sounded like they were starting to train their artillery on Camp Crame. We were sitting ducks with only the roof on our heads.

General Ramos gave instructions for civilians to clear the building. I went down to escort my wife Natty outside and stoically kissed her goodbye but she was unaware what was happening.

A foreign correspondent saw me at the ground floor and frantically asked: "What's this I heard that the tide is shifting in favor of Marcos and you guys are losing control?" I answered "No!" tongue in cheek.

Let the shells fall

At the War Room, someone suggested, "General Ramos, sir, I think we should transfer to the second floor because we only have the weak roof as our protection when those shells fall." But Ramos very coolly said: "No, we stay here because all our communications are here and they are very important. We stay until the shells start falling. I am sure the first rounds won't hit us!"

DAY ONE of the revolt, Golez (foreground) joins the breakaway military in Camp Crame's war room. Enrile is on the phone talking to Marcos. Golez was the first high government official after Enrile and Ramos to withdraw support from Marcos.

Some guys started laying down anti-bomb blankets on the desks for cover. There was not enough room for all of us there so we just shrugged our shoulders and waited for the shells to fall.

But the shells never came. The guns remained silent because the other side, now we know, refused to heed the orders. We could monitor the Army commanding general asking what was happening, why the orders to fire were not being followed.

Then all clear was given and we all breathed a sigh of relief.

Later that day, a chopper counterattacked and fired a rocket at Malacañang. After the reports and the cheers from us in Crame, I called my friend at Malacañang. My friend said they were terribly shaken. They were obviously demoralized and I told my friend, "Take care of yourself."

The Ramos counter-attack culminated with the decision to seize Channel 4. Capt. Phil Plaza was one of those tasked to lead the attack. There was radio silence as we excitedly awaited the outcome and cheered when we learned it was a success. All of sudden there was Maan Hontiveros on TV and there was pandemonium in the War Room. But when Plaza returned, he looked like they lost, because his face was bloodied. A bullet hit the wall he was using as cover and the shattered concrete hit his face.

'I am sorry Mr. President'

That day also, I was in the small group in the War Room when Marcos called up Enrile. Marcos was starting to negotiate. We, Rene Cayetano and the others, could hear only half of the conversation and Enrile just kept on saying, "Yes, sir. Yes, Mr. President..." as the phone crackled.

Rene and I were telling Enrile, don't believe him sir. But we were so happy when Enrile finally said, "I am sorry Mr. President, it is too late for that now. All preparations are now being finalized for a new government." After the conversation, Enrile told us that Marcos was proposing power sharing, that Marcos was willing to stay as ceremonial president and Enrile would run the government. Enrile rejected the offer.

Later that night, a delegation arrived from the Cory group led by Ramon Mitra. Rene Cayetano and I listened as they discussed with Enrile the formation of the new government. But things were moving so fast.

Close to midnight, Col. Tirso Gador, one of the key troop commanders in Crame, was emotionally talking on the phone. He was very angry that the oath-taking of Cory Aquino would not be in Camp Crame but in Club Filipino.

He asked angrily, "Why father, you do not trust us? We are here prepared to die for her and you don't trust us?" I understood the person on the other line was Fr. Joaquin Bernas, who advised against a Cory oath-taking in Crame to avoid the appearance that the military was the one handing over power to the new President.

What a day the 24th had been with the shifting tides of the conflict! That was the most stressful day for those in the War Room.

Tanks pull out

Early on Tuesday, Feb. 25, there was a report of a column of tanks coming in from the North through the North Diversion Road.

General Ramos asked: "OK, what do we do now?"

Col. Gregorio Honasan replied: "We will take care of them, sir. It is very easy to stop a column of tanks in narrow roads." But that became unnecessary. The tanks were moving out to defend Malacañang. The Marcos government also had collapsed.

In the afternoon, I got a late message that Col. Arturo Aruiza, senior military aide of Marcos, was trying to reach me and offering to negotiate. Colonel Aruiza was a friend, my company commander when I was a plebe in PMA. He gave a phone number for me to call. When I called, the phone just kept on ringing. That's when I got convinced that they were already abandoning the Palace.

I never had the chance to talk to Colonel Aruiza after Edsa I. He died years ago and I will forever wonder what it was he wanted to tell me to help bring an end to the drama. But that gesture, whatever it was, came too late. Greater forces, human and divine, took control to end the Marcos regime and take the nation to another destiny.

Why the cannons did not fire at Edsa

By **Napoleon C. Manalo**

(Last of two parts)

Day 3, Feb. 24, 1986

AT A LITTLE PAST 5:00 A.M., I WAS awakened by the ringing of the telephone. It was Maj. Wyrlo Ver. He insisted that I wake up my father, Col. Carlos B. Manalo, the chief ordnance and bomb disposal expert of the Philippine Constabulary, because what he had to tell him was very urgent. They spoke for some 15 to 20 minutes.

Afterward, my father and I sat down to breakfast. He looked harassed, worried and tired. I asked him what Wyrlo said.

"He said his father [General Ver] was very angry that the ammunition for the cannons had not been released. And Marcos was also getting angry. I was asked if I had defected like the others, otherwise why had I not signed the release orders."

I asked him what he told Wyrlo.

"I told him the truth, that I had an attack of high blood pressure, that I was feeling so dizzy no one could speak to me. He said he would send the sergeant again this morning and that I should sign the release orders," he said.

I asked if he would sign it.

Big decision

He replied: "Son, there comes a time in a man's life when he has to think very hard and well about a big decision. When he arrives, let the sergeant in."

The enlisted man arrived before 7 a.m. and was escorted to our living room. As soon as he saw my father come out of the bedroom, he stood up and executed a snappy salute. Then he presented the release orders.

After reading through the documents, my father said: ""The signatures are not complete."

The sergeant replied: "Sir, we could not contact the others, not even by radio. General Ver does not know if they have defected already."

'What would you do?'

My father said: "I'd like to ask you. If you were in my position in this situation, will you sign if ordered by General Ver to do so?"

"That's hard to say Sir. I really don't know Sir," the sergeant answered.

"You're right, it's a difficult decision. You go back to Wyrlo and General Ver and tell them I refused to sign because the signatures are not complete. And if they have any heart left in them, they should not use the cannons against the people at Edsa."

The sergeant said: " Sir, I don't know if I can do that."

My father told him: "If you cannot say that to your bosses, then don't show yourself anymore because you will just become the target of their anger. You can go now because I will not sign this."

The sergeant stood up, saluted my father and left. We never saw that sergeant again.

As soon as he left, I asked my father, "Does this mean you will be joining the camp of Enrile and Ramos?"

He smiled and said: "Yes. I will just rest for a while and then I will go to Crame."

My father's decision was a big relief to the family.

At mid-day, President Marcos was shown on Channel 9. He instructed General Ver not to use big firearms (referring to the howitzers) but only small firearms and tear gas to disperse the people at Edsa. When my father heard that, he laughed.

"Who is he kidding? Of course they cannot use the big firearms because the cannons have no ammunition," he said.

He could not stop laughing, probably from relief that the pressure was off him. It made me happy to see him so jolly.

At about 1 p.m., two police cars stopped in front of our gate. Six policemen alighted. While two knocked at our gate, the others stayed behind their cars with drawn firearms.

I left them knocking at the gate for five minutes, because it took me that long to wait for my brother, father and our drivers/bodyguards to take their positions in case there should be a gunfight and for the women and children to hide in the bathrooms.

I approached the gate and, with a very authoritative voice, asked through the closed door who it was.

Report of guns

The policeman said they had received a report that there were guns in the house.

I asked if they had a search warrant and if they did not, to go away.

I never got an answer. The policemen went back to their cars and drove off.

After I went into the house, my father said if the policemen returned and insisted on coming in, we should shoot it out with them.

At 2.30 p.m., my father issued instructions to one of his bodyguards to prepare his uniform and staff car, he was going to Camp Crame.

He instructed another to radio the camp to inform them that he was defecting and have someone meet him at the gate as he would not be carrying any arms.

The third soldier was to stay behind to guard the house.

At about 3 p.m, my father and two driver/bodyguards left for Camp Crame.

Delivered from Ver

We were all listening to "Radyo Bandido" after dinner when we heard the announcement that my father was one of the key officers to have joined the Enrile-Ramos camp. We all clapped for my father because he made the right decision. I felt so proud of him for having delivered himself from the bondage of being a crony of General Ver.

At about 9 p.m., my father returned from Camp Crame and had a lot of stories to tell. He said Gen. Renato de Villa shook his hand and embraced him. General Ramos thanked him for joining them and invited him to the briefing on the next moves of the breakaway group. He said Camp Crame was bursting with brotherly love, pride and unity. It was a new beginning for my father. You could see the excitement in his eyes.

Day 4, Feb. 25, 1986

Our day started early. My father left for Camp Crame at 6 a.m. We watched TV almost the entire day and saw Cory Aquino's swearing-in as President of the Philippines at Club Filipino. We also saw President Marcos' version of his inauguration in Malacañang.

By early evening, the news was out that President Marcos with his family and their cronies had left Malacañang. This was really a true moment of joy for every Filipino and we were glad that soon things would be back to normal.

We anxiously waited for my father to get home to listen to the latest developments in the Enrile-Ramos camp. He returned at about 11 p.m. My father informed us that General Ramos had placed him in charge of the mopping-up operations—that is, the clearing of planted bombs— in Malacañang and the PSC camp. He was given this responsibility because he was the only senior officer who had the competence for the job.

The day ended blissfully for my father because he knew he performed to the best of his ability as a military officer of the republic.

My father stayed on in the active service until May 1986. His last day in the service was May 31, his 56th birthday. On that occasion, I remember him telling us sadly:

"After more than 30 years in the service, I've only now realized that all my medals, citations and recognitions have no value at all. If I were to sell them all, the money will not even buy us a good dinner."

Our family was not at Edsa during the four glorious days. But we were not fence-sitters. Everyone of us, particularly our father, did our share for Edsa. I firmly believe that my father's contribution counted far more than that of any person present there.

MESSAGES

Department of Tourism

WARMEST greetings to the participants and guests of Asian GEM and Tourism Foundation, Inc. for holding ASIA's GEM – Gaming and Entertainment Plus Leisure Expo-Conference.

It is our hope that such a momentous event will strongly make a positive impact on the future of our nation.

Both local and global tourism have long been in synergy with gaming. Similarly, travel and entertainment are also closely linked to both industries.

As lifestyles evolve in the global community, the need for cooperative ventures and investments become more underscored. It is no longer sufficient to focus on market segments alone, to boost up the economy.

Today, what is needed is the ability to harness and pool resources together so that existing industry markets may continue to be tapped successfully, at the same time that newer markets are being developed.

ASIA's GEM is a purposeful stride in that direction. Through this Expo-Conference, more diverse opportunities for the participation of local and international investors, especially those in gaming and tourism, will be explored and established.

We extend the utmost in renowned Filipino hospitality to all the esteemed guests and participants of ASIA's GEM.

We see you as our staunch allies in strengthening our national economy and providing a brighter future for generations of Filipinos to come.

Our most heartfelt congratulations to the Asian GEM and Tourism Foundation, Inc., for the successful mounting of ASIA's GEM.

JOSEPH 'ACE' H. DURANO
Secretary

PTA

CONGRATULATIONS to the Asian Gem and Tourism Foundation, Inc. for the impressive mounting of the Asia's Gem – Gaming and Entertainment Plus Leisure Expo-Conference.

The Philippine Tourism Authority is one of the government's lead agencies in showcasing the Philippines as a haven for travelers and visitors. The efforts of the PTA have been focused not only on developing loyalty by way of frequent tourist returns to our country, but also in making sure that we generate newer markets.

Such fluidity in tourist influx can only be achieved if our country is at par with offering visitors what the rest of the international community can offer.

In this regard, capitalizing on the synergy between gaming and tourism is a very laudable undertaking. Through such a move, it is expected that our country will be able to generate more tourist arrivals and consequently, provide business and industries allied with gaming and tourism with more vibrant market shares.

We look with fond expectations on the outcome and future impact that the Asia's Gem – Gaming and Entertainment Plus Leisure Expo-Conference will generate on our economy.

Through the camaraderie and exchange of ideas that will be nourished among various industry leaders and opinion makers during the Expo-Conference, the Philippines stands to gain a strong foothold in attracting both tourists and investors.

On behalf of the PTA, I extend our gratitude and praise for the assistance of everyone who helped make this Expo-Conference a reality and creating a timely opportunity for people to experience our country's beauty.

In service to God, country and the Filipino people,

ROBERT DEAN S. BARBERS
General Manager/Chief Executive Officer

dti

On behalf of the Department of Trade and Industry, I extend my congratulations to the Asian GEM and Tourism Foundation, Inc., for successfully organizing the ASIA's GEM - Gaming and Entertainment Plus Leisure Expo-Conference.

Investments are crucial to the growth of our economy and ultimately, our development as a nation. We see international events such as ASIA's GEM, which assemble experts and business leaders in the gaming and tourism industries, as prime opportunities for creating a bigger niche for investors in the Philippines.

We foresee the stimulation of trade and industry through the establishment of new business ventures, as well as the strengthening of existing ones in the areas of gaming and tourism.

Making the most of the special mutually-beneficial relationship between the two industries is more than a step forward in the right direction; it is the emulation of the proven measures taken by other countries to improve their economy.

For this reason, we gladly look forward to the years ahead, when the fruits of such undertakings as ASIA's GEM will have made their eventual impact on our economy.

Mabuhay!

PETER B. FAVILLA
Secretary

PAGCOR

CONGRATULATIONS to the Asian GEM and Tourism Foundation, Inc. for the successful mounting of ASIA's GEM - Gaming and Entertainment Plus Leisure Expo-Conference.

It marks the definitive presence of our country in the global travel-tourism and gaming industries.

The old image of gaming has gradually changed over the years. Today, gaming is no longer seen as an end in itself. Rather, it is now acknowledged as one of the vital parts of tourism, an amenity that belongs in the area of entertainment.

The implications of such a shift in perspectives augur well for Philippine society and economy. With the reality of gaming as an entertainment component gaining acceptance in a broad international tourist market, more avenues for the generation of jobs and investment opportunities are opened for our country.

An event such as ASIA's GEM highlights these emerging realities and more… much more.

The speakers during the Conference are all highly experienced and renowned in both the international gaming and tourism industries. They have come to share their knowledge and expertise with us, serving as inspirations for our efforts to adapt their strategies and build upon their successes.

The Eurasian Summit, meanwhile, which coincides with the Asia's GEM, is one step closer to my vision of seeing all casino operators in Asia and Europe forging a tightly-knit relationship based on cooperation and the pursuit of common interests.

Our industry friends who have lent their support for this event, they are the backbone of our government's positioning for market penetration and leadership in the tourism and investment sectors.

All who have worked hard, leaving no stone unturned, to make ASIA's GEM a reality, they are our co-architects in creating a brighter socio-economic blueprint for future generations of Filipinos.

In behalf of all of PAGCOR's employees and officials, we wish you fruitfulness in all your endeavors.

Mabuhay!

EFRAIM C. GENUINO
Chairman and CEO

ASIAN GEM AND TOURISM FOUNDATION, INC.

A warm welcome to all our esteemed guests, supporters and friends from the ASIAN GEM AND TOURISM FOUNDATION, INC.!

Your participation in ASIA's GEM – Gaming and Entertainment Plus Leisure Expo-Conference deeply honors the Filipino people, for this event is meant to develop opportunities intended to boost our country's involvement in the new face of tourism, a step that we firmly believe will hasten our government's plans for economic resurgence and further social development.

As a one-stop-shop of gaming, travel and tourism and entertainment businesses, ASIA's GEM, the first ever of its kind event to be held not only in the Philippines, but also in the whole of Asia, is a clear and shining example of what Filipinos could accomplish when they are given much valued support from the global community.

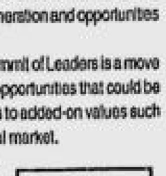
The insights of our Conference Speakers, their experiences and advice as to how the synergy between the gaming and tourism industries can revitalize a location, are treasures that we cherish and hold on to with fervent hope.

The support of all our exhibitors, with their showcase of the latest in gaming machineries and equipment, gaming related products and services, vacation clubs, golf clubs, popular and new tourist destinations, and entertainment providers and venues, all point to one direction: that of increased job generation and opportunities of livelihood.

Finally, the presence of numerous global decision makers in the Eurasian Summit of Leaders is a move towards proclaiming solidarity among various nations who clearly see the wealth of opportunities that could be mined from the realization that the new face of tourism requires dynamic approaches to added-on values such as the participation of the gaming, entertainment and leisure industries for the global market.

It is no wonder then that our excitement and hopes for the eventual successful outcome of ASIA's GEM are unbounded.

For this, we once more extend our heartfelt gratitude to all participants of ASIA's GEM. May the fruits of our labor be sweet and productive, through the years to come.

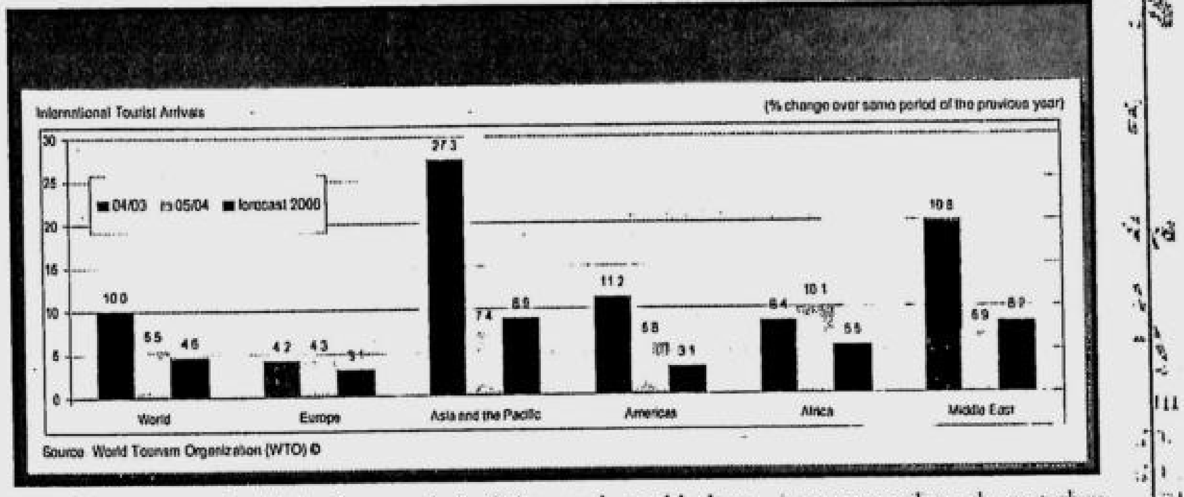


CELINE F. CLEMENTE
President

ASIA'S GEM - Gaming and Entertainment *plus* Leisure Expo-Conference Opens today

World Trade Center, February 22-23, 2006

Asia's lucky streak in tourism continues despite great odds



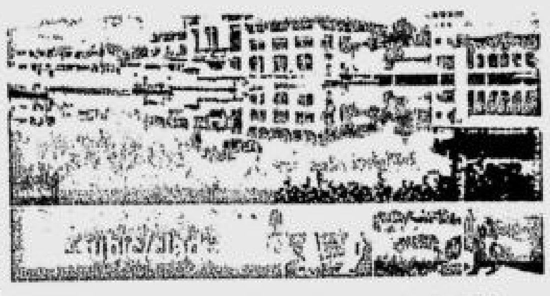
Source: World Tourism Organization (WTO) ©

THE PHILIPPINES hosts for the first time a major international gaming, tourism, investment conferences and exhibit that opens today at the World Trade Center.

Asia's Gem is a major international event with a simultaneous Gaming and Tourism Conference. It is a one-stop-shop of gaming, travel and tourism and entertainment businesses catering to CEO's and COO's of global corporations with business interests in the aforementioned industries. It is a showcase of the latest in gaming machineries and equipment, gaming related products and services, vacation clubs, golf clubs, popular and new destinations, and new entertainment providers and venues such as talent management centers, booking offices among others.

It is remarkable how Asia's tourism industry manages to hold on to its lucky streak inspite of the great odds that it faced in the past two years and continues to face today. Terrorism, avian flu, SARS and even natural disasters as the Indian Ocean tsunami failed to dampen the spirit of travelers to Asia.

According to the January issue of the World Tourism Barometer, official newsletter of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), in 2005, 11 million of the staggering 42 million additional arrivals recorded worldwide were credited to Asia and the Pacific.



Economic growth measured in terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is closely allied with an upsurge in tourist arrivals, underscoring the fact that among sectoral industries worldwide, tourism continues to be a reliable performer when it comes to producing much needed revenue for government coffers. This has been traditionally accepted to translate into the more effective delivery of basic services to the people of any given region.

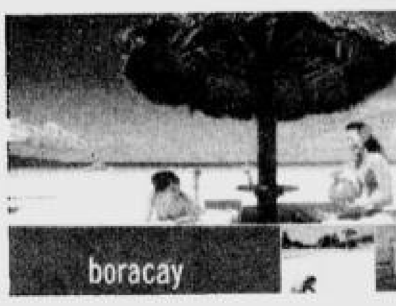
Hopes remain high for sustained upward mobility in tourist arrivals this year. A short-term forecast has been arrived at by the UNWTO in cooperation with the Fundacion Premio Arce of the Universidad Politecnica de Madrid that shows an anticipated 4-5% growth in 2006.

Expected to be the fastest growing region in the world is that of Asia and the Pacific with a +9% surge forecast.

Many factors contribute to this Asian-Pacific trend. Among these are the increasingly market-savvy strategies applied in the region. Campaigns such as "Amazing Thailand", "Malaysia - Truly Asia", "WOW Philippines", "Dynamic Korea" and "Indonesia, the Ultimate Diversity" have been shown to effectively attract hordes of leisure tourists.

Another factor is the increasing awareness of the gaming-propelled aspect of tourism. Outbound travel for leisure gaming is not a concept new to Asians. In many Asian countries, tradition and culture place premium emphasis on the role of good fortune in their daily lives.

Meanwhile, casinos are now fully packaged as ultimate leisure or recreation centers, complete with hotel and resort tie-ups, modern amenities and facilities, and world-class entertainment showcases with premium beverages and cuisine made available to their patrons.



The single biggest casino in terms of revenues is Sands Macau, bringing in more than 65 thousand visitors daily. Macau, reputed as the casino gaming capital of Asia, recorded tourist arrivals of almost 20 million tourists last year, compared with 17 million in 2004. Contrast this with 1999's tourist arrivals of 7 million then a definitive picture of gaming-propelled tourism becomes clear. The GDP of this special administrative region rose by 28 percent in 2005 from $10.3 billion in 2004. This was a sharp upward curve from 1999's 3% percent contraction.

This is why countries which outwardly shunned casino gaming in the past, such as Singapore and Thailand, are now looking into this industry as a way to boost their tourism indicators.

Today, Singapore is poised to create integrated resort facilities, featuring gaming as a major tourist attraction while the Thai government has already endorsed the legalization of casinos in the kingdom.

Bringing the issue closer to home, the Philippine government, through the Department of Tourism (DOT) has made clear exactly where it stands when it comes to utilizing the mutualism that exists between gaming and tourism.

During the closing program of the 25th Asian Tourism Forum (ATF) held in Davao City, which ran from Jan. 13-21 of this year, Department of Tourism Sec. Ace Durano said that, "Casinos will be among the main attractions that the Philippines will package this year to attract more tourists from India. We'll be going strong on India this year, one of the secondary staple markets we'll try to develop along with Russia. Tourists from India are very keen on gaming."

Relative to this, Chairman Efraim Genuino of the Philippines Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR), positioned as the biggest promoter of Philippine tourism, says that "We have reinvented our casinos to be not just places to enjoy a complete gaming experience, but to be world-class tourist destinations as well. From the very architecture and interior design of our Casino Filipino branches to the warm, personalized services which we provide and down to bright and sunny smiles of our staff – all of these capture and embody the richness of the unique Filipino culture."

A VISION OF EXCELLENCE

PAGCOR Chairman and CEO Efraim C. Genuino is a man with a bold vision and the will to see it to fruition.

Ever mindful that PAGCOR's mandate includes the promotion of tourism, Chairman Genuino has embarked on numerous decisive moves to implement the direction expected of him by the government and the Filipino people, whose interests are closest to his heart.

Asked about the way PAGCOR is positioned as the biggest promoter of Philippine tourism, Chairman Genuino states that as far as the Corporation is concerned, "PAGCOR has undergone a paradigm shift in the past few years – from mere gaming to total entertainment. In line with this, we have reinvented our casinos to be not just places to enjoy a complete gaming experience, but to be world-class tourist destinations as well. From the very architecture and interior design of our Casino Filipino branches to the warm, personalized services which we provide and down to bright and sunny smiles of our staff – all of these capture and embody the richness of the unique Filipino culture."

Chairman Genuino is very much aware of, and is a dynamic supporter of the latest global business trends regarding tourism and gaming.

He acknowledges how both industries now smoothly complement the operations of one another worldwide.

His vision is to transform PAGCOR into a "Global Corporation with a Global Mindset and a Filipino Heart."

One of the major means he expects to accomplish this is through the proposed project, "Bagong Nayon Pilipino-Entertainment City Manila", which is set to be built on the prime reclaimed land along the historic Roxas Boulevard and majestic Manila Bay.

The Entertainment City Manila is a special economic tourism zone which will feature attractions found in the most popular tourism destinations around the world, similar to what Las Vegas and Disneyland are offering. It will be composed of complexes with various themes such as Winter Wonderland, Undersea Adventure and Tropical Rainforest. It will have five-star hotels, casinos, shopping malls and arcades, amusement parks, cultural facilities, and sports stadiums, among other features.

Chairman Genuino further says that it is PAGCOR'S intention "to create a tourism zone that will be competitive with those found in other countries. This will be our contribution to President Gloria Macapagal-Arryo's masterplan for economic recovery. We hope to see the Philippines firmly mark its place on the world map and at the same time, become one of the more bullish economies worldwide."

In his capable hands and with his strong determination to succeed, such a vision of excellence may become a reality sooner than we think.

Meanwhile, the PAGCOR chief has a vision of seeing all casino operators in Asia and Europe forge a tightly-knit relationship based on cooperation and the pursuit of common interests. This is the rationale behind the staging of the first Eurasian Summit, which will coincide with the holding of the first Asia's GEM.

The Eurasian Summit aims to effectively represent the common interest of the participants and uphold the principles of fair play and cooperation among them. It also seeks to provide leadership in addressing primary industry concerns such as social acceptability, corporate social responsibility and the industry's role in charity, as well as issues affecting global business in gaming and tourism. Likewise, it will provide services that will synergize tourism and gaming, ultimately contributing to the respective incomes of its members.

ASIAN GEM AND TOURISM FOUNDATION, INC.

Building resources, tapping opportunities

THE PARTNERSHIP between the private sector and the government has always been a key feature in the socio-economic development plans of any nation.

A government thrives on the support and belief in it of the people. The private sector relies on the government to provide it with necessary guidance and support.

There is an undeniable, mutually-beneficial synergy between the government and the private sector.

It is the same for the gaming and tourism industries.

They work together as one, to produce an effect greater than the sum of their individual effects.

Such an impact cannot be realized when one is made to survive without the other. This is a truth that is the backbone of the ASIAN GEM AND TOURISM FOUNDATION, INC.

A non-stock, non profit organization, ASIAN GEM has been created exclusively to boost government efforts in generating revenue and jobs through the travel and tourism and gaming industries.

Headed by its president, Ms. Marceline (Celine) Clemente, the focus of the Foundation is the building upon resources and the tapping of opportunities to assist and maximize government efforts towards social and economic progress.

A multi-faceted organization, ASIAN GEM exists to enhance investors to believe in the Philippines and establish bases of operation in the country. It also serves as the link or bridge between various livelihood networks, particularly those from the gaming, travel and tourism, entertainment and leisure industries.

Moreover, ASIAN GEM, with the proven track record and reliable industry background of its management and staff, aims to be one of the dependable partners of the government in harnessing and securing long-term business ventures from the global community.

It is among the industry leaders in tourism, capably active in the promotion of our country through its involvement in nurturing dance troupes who give cultural performances in various international events.

The Foundation believes in the inherent value of the Filipino people — reliable, resourceful, industrious, and willing to face new challenges and overcome these through strength of character.

Such traits are imbued in the corporate structure of ASIAN GEM. It is their calling, their mission to succeed, their vision to achieve.

ASIAN GEM AND TOURISM FOUNDATION, INC.
PAGCOR
Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office
esl Emphasis Services Ltd.
dti
Sports
SAN MIGUEL CORPORATION
imx
GLOBAL Gaming Business MAGAZINE
ePLDT enabling infrastructure
Coca-Cola

Farmer on mountaintop witnessed landslide

By Volt Contreras

ST. BERNARD, SOUTHERN Leyte—Upland farmer Venancio Mensede was standing only a few meters from the fissured chunk of Mt. Kan-Abagon when it suddenly broke loose under heavy rains and buried his entire village below.

He was clinging to a tree when he saw Barangay Guinsaugon disappear in a raging flood of mud and boulders, including the school then holding over 200 pupils and teachers—his 12-year-old daughter Chona and niece Nenita among them.

Four days later, the 50-year-old abaca grower returned to the spot where, he assumed, his house had stood. Looming not too far was the mist-topped mountain, its lush green coat rent down the middle by the brown bruise of last Friday's landslide.

With this deceptively serene vista for a backdrop, it was as though curtains in a tragic play had half-way parted, revealing Mensede as a sulking, solitary actor on stage.

Rescue workers saw him squatted on a pile of rocks, apparently scanning the surrounding devastation for any signs of hope.

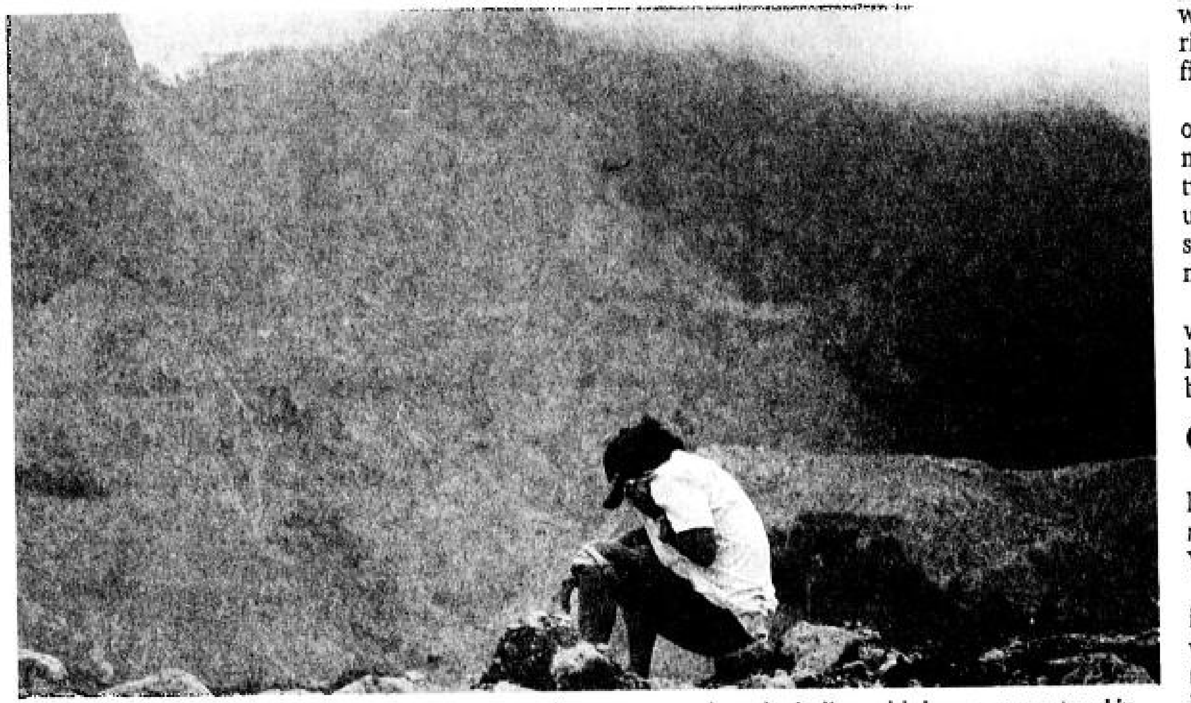
He was weeping by the time journalists got to the site to ask him questions.

Mensede would only give short answers—names, ages, a vague gesture, a nod or two. Grief, for this hemp gatherer, was much too raw, primal and better left unspoken.

No monologue from this tragic figure just yet—for, evidently, the healing process has hardly begun for him and his ill-fated village, what with over 900 of its residents (or half of its population) still missing and believed to be entombed in the landslide.

With rescue operations still going on and local government officials unwilling to concede that all is lost, this town has yet to find the tranquility it needs to purge its sorrows through a special Mass or a ceremony of collective mourning.

As of yesterday, Philippine and US military choppers ferrying men and supplies to the rescue camps and evacuation centers continued to roar in the skies, reminding everyone that the search for the dead—or for miracles—was far from over. *With a report from Edwin Bacasmas*


GRIEVING farmer Venancio Mensede pauses on the very spot where he believes his house once stood in Barangay Guinsaugon. Now, there's only rubble and mud and a gnawing pain over his loss. EDWIN BACASMAS

Stories scarred survivors tell

From page A1

seen the need to buy feeds for his piggery that morning, with his wife Epifania herself getting worried they would not have enough firewood to last the day.

So off she went to what turned out to be a "safe" part of the mountain to gather branches and twigs. He left the house 15 minutes later on his bicycle to buy a sack of ipa (rice husks) from neighboring Barangay Catmon.

He was just leaving Guinsaugon when he saw the mountain collapse. He recalled it being triggered by a quake and an explosion.

God's promise

The sight made him cry out to heaven in terror: *"Ginoo! Natapos na ang imong gipamulong* (My God! Your promise has been fulfilled!)

Also serving as a Catholic lay minister in Catmon, Nerio said the soul-wrenching spectacle made him utter those words as it instantly reminded him of the Biblical verse where God had "promised to change the face of the Earth."

It was one of those verses he associated with "the end of the world."

Fortunately, the end never came for any member of his household that day since his three grown-up children, all by his deceased first wife, were living in different provinces.

Still missing, however, were his two sisters, Sabina and Neneng, along with their families, including seven small children.

It is for them that he spends his idle hours at the evacuation center in silent prayer, he said, showing the rosary in his right hand. He then pointed to his wife Epifania, who is also active in their church as a catechism teacher and who, since the evacuation, has worn her rosary around her neck.

Whether it's through Venancio Mensede's silence *(See story at left)* or the Nerio couple's assertion of faith, coming to terms with a terrible loss may be this town's next arduous challenge—long after the rescuers of Barangay Guinsaugon had given up. *With a report from Edwin Bacasma*

Leyte Relief Fund Drive

THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER in partnership with the League of Corporate Foundations (LCF), is providing assistance to the Southern Leyte landslide victims through the Corporate Network for Disaster Response. You may send your donations in cash or check to the INQUIRER office, Yague corner Mascardo Street, Chino Roces Avenue or call the Corporate Relations office at 897-8808 loc. 238.

No more sounds of life under mud up to 30 meters deep

From page A1

where some 250 pupils and teachers were feared buried after a mountainside collapsed Friday and swamped the Guinsaugon village of 1,800 people with mud and boulders.

The governor's office put the death toll at 107, including 11 body parts found in different places. More than 900 are still missing.

Dr. Adelaida Asperin, a Department of Health official, listed 93 dead.

The discouraging reports from the multinational teams scouring the village came a day after Gov. Rosette Lerias spoke of "increasing positive signs of life" being detected at the site.

Lerias was referring to official field reports that "scratching" and then "faint rhythmic tapping" were heard on Sunday and Monday with the help of sensitive instruments. A US officer also told the INQUIRER that American troops had heard what they thought were "voices" coming from underneath.

Time to face reality

But yesterday, some rescue workers said it was time to face the truth that the missing must now be dead, Agence France-Presse reported.

"It is good to hope but relatives of those missing should by now already know the reality," the French news agency quoted Hector Reyes, leader of the Philippine canine search and rescue team, as saying.

Reached by the INQUIRER at 3:30 p.m. yesterday, Lt. Col. Raul Farnacio, commanding general of the Philippine military units mobilized for the rescue, said: "There are no more signs, no more indicators coming from the school."

Air Force rescue leader Capt. Roman Dioso, at 4:15 p.m., echoed Farnacio's statement.

Not only were there "no signs (of life) so far," but the various teams had yet to see any part of the school building exposed despite their use of a backhoe over the past two hours, Dioso said.

A more definitive assessment came from Lu Cheng Tsung, commandant of the Taiwanese search and rescue team, which brought along some of the high-tech life detection instruments being used here.

Asked through an interpreter whether their gadgets had picked up life indicators, Lu said: "So far there is no progress in these things ... in any sign of human beings alive."

'We'll keep on working'

On the victims' chance of survival five days after being trapped underground, he said: "It is not optimistic, but we'll keep on working and try to find people either alive or dead."

Maj. Gen. Bonifacio Ramos, overall ground commander of the rescue operation, said the diggings had reached 10 to 15 meters deep in the area where the school was believed to be buried. No structure of the school had been found.

The village had been buried in 10 to 30 meters of mud and boulders, according to initial estimates.

Ramos said rescue teams, hampered by sporadic rains, would try to work on a 24-hour basis if the weather permitted.

Prospects of finding life under mud were fading by the hour.

The rescue workers from four countries yesterday dug at a different spot from where they had excitedly detected underground sounds earlier.

But ground-penetrating radar, capable of mapping structures up to 17 meters deep, found nothing.

The threat of more rain-triggered landslides slowed the search, as did confusion over where to dig and problems dealing with the wet mud.

Excavation had centered Monday at a site where the school was believed to have sat, with some troops, miners and volunteers digging at a second site, about 200 meters away where some estimated the school might have been carried.

US Marines, digging in shifts of 40 men, worked alongside Philippine troops and technical experts from Malaysia and Taiwan, but finally had to give up at the first site when the holes they created kept collapsing.

"As we'd dig deeper, we'd try to dig wider, but with the rain last night ... there were little landslides happening around us," said Lt. Jack Farley, head of the Marine contingent. "The soil here is so unstable."

'We heard something'

It also was unclear if the scratching, tapping noises and what seemed like voices that were heard Monday had come from survivors or just ground water or the mud settling.

"A few times we heard something, we think we heard something, because we really want to hear something," Farley said. "If there is anything at all, we're gonna go there."

Accurate information was hard to come by, too.

"Even the local population has kind of lost their bearings," Farley said. "They don't have those terrain features around to distinguish where something really is."

No giving up

No one has been pulled out alive since a few hours after the disaster struck.

Still, rescue workers refused to give up hope.

Under the glare of generator-powered lights, the multinational group used high-tech gear like seismic sensors and sound- and heat-detection equipment alongside shovels and rescue dogs.

They halted at around 3 a.m. yesterday and resumed work after daybreak.

Only a river

"We heard some sound but there was no sign of life," Taiwanese rescuer Benjamin Hong said. "We only heard the sound of the flowing river. We haven't heard any other life signs."

He said his team would continue checking at other sites around three separate hills of mud where the school was buried.

Joel Son, head of a rescue team of Filipino miners, said the mud was so deep that searchers had yet to find the school.

"Safety is an ongoing concern right now because of the rain," said US Marine Capt. Burrell Parmer. "So far, no survivors have been recovered. It's a sad deal."

The smell of rotting bodies wafted through the command post of the relief effort, one kilometer from the landslide site.

Asked why she was clinging to a hope that survivors would still be found in the buried school when most of the rest of the world appeared to have given up hope, Mayor Maria Lim said: "Because I believe in miracles."

"We are waiting for a miracle to happen, we are not losing hope. The search for survivors continues," a grim-looking Lim told the INQUIRER last night.

A team of geologists from the University of the Philippines and Ateneo de Manila University arrived yesterday with ground penetrating radar that could detect a structure up to 17 meters below. *With reports from Jani Arnaiz, PDI Visayas Bureau, AP and AFP*

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80 Abanse! Pinay ...

From page A1

saugon Women's Health Association at the St. Bernard open-air auditorium near the barangay hall in Southern Leyte.

Laureen Daclan Dumaguing, Abanse coordinator in the province, described how the party-list group would have celebrated the occasion: A simple lunch of yams, bananas and a pork dish, plus singing and dancing, a skit and lots of speeches.

They were always a jolly group, Dumaguing, 41, said of the 100 or so Abanse members whom she last saw during their national assembly in Cebu in October 2005.

"The women brought their children, who then played among themselves. It was a potluck affair and we had *biko* (rice cakes), bananacue and juice. There was a lot of laughter because we had been told to come up with instant chants, songs and dances to depict our role in the barangay," she recalled.

Dumaguing would have been among the casualties, but she was tied down with responsibilities as executive director of another women's group in Baybay, Leyte, a 3-hour bus ride away.

The celebration just slipped her mind. And the Abanse members had apparently forgotten to invite her as well, maybe because they were busy fine-tuning a project proposal on top of the anniversary preparations, she said.

Health initiatives

The group was behind health initiatives in Guinsaugon, including the Women's Health and Safe Motherhood Project of the Department of Health and the local government unit.

It also managed the barangay health center, the Botika ng Barangay, a cooperative, a social lending program, a pig dispersal project and the Piso for Health medical insurance scheme.

"They were always so active and cohesive," said Beverly Capeña, Abanse chapter coordinator for Southern Leyte, who missed the celebration because the computer at the group's office in St. Bernard had broken down.

She had to go home to Silago, three towns away, to finish the proposal herself.

Capeña, 56, had half her mind on the anniversary party as she typed away that Friday. Realizing it was almost 11 a.m., she thought: They should be starting at about this time.

And then she started receiving text messages from friends: Where was she? Was she all right?

Like family

Knowing that she hardly missed any Abanse event, they thought she was among the missing women feared buried alive in the landslide.

She had wanted to be there, said Capeña, along with Mayor Maria Lim, the barangay captain, and three of his councilmen, the wife of an agriculture official, a social welfare representative, and community organizer Elvie Adolfo.

Mayor Lim, who was to deliver the inspirational message, had begged off at the last minute because she had to attend another meeting in San Juan town.

She sent four of her staff members instead—three midwives and a health worker. Now they are all gone.

"They were like family to me," Capeña said of her missing colleagues, her voice breaking.

She organized the party-list group in Southern Leyte in 2000, and watched it grow into a strong presence in the barangay.

In 2001, the women organized themselves into the Guinsaugon Women's Health Association to take on a DOH project funded by the European Commission.

They were a lively group, some of them newlyweds but most of them housewives and mothers, said Capeña, a medical technologist turned social development worker who is also the executive director of the Southern Pacific Integrated Area Development Inc.

Only 20 left

So far, none of the women's bodies pulled from the mud has been identified.

Capeña noted that the rescuers had yet to start excavating the auditorium area. Or maybe some of the women had been buried with nameless others in the mass grave, she said.

Of the members of Abanse Southern Leyte, only 20 are left—those who skipped the celebration for one reason or another, including a pregnant housewife who went home to prepare lunch for her family, Dumaguing said.

But there's hardly time to grieve, said Capeña, who has since reverted to social worker mode.

Saturday morning saw her phoning her contacts, seeking assistance for the landslide survivors.

Generous response

The response has been most generous: scholarship grants for the children from Abanse's Cebu chapter, Lihok Pilipina; livelihood projects for the spouses through Oxfam; easy housing loans from the Philippine Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in the Rural Areas.

Will Abanse survive this tragedy?

"Yes, definitely!" Capeña said, saying the men had volunteered to take their wives' place in the party-list group and promised to continue what the women had started.

Although touched, Capeña remained grounded: "This is not the right time to talk about the organization. There's urgent work to be done."

Shabu mini market busted in Taguig City

By Jocelyn R. Uy

POLICEMEN YESTERDAY RAIDED A smaller version of Pasig's shabu mart in Taguig City based on a tip from a drug dealer.

Unlike Senior Insp. Eufrenio Obong, head of Taguig's Drug Enforcement Unit (DEU), said the drug den, which was composed of three shanties, was located across a creek in Ibayo Bukid, Barangay Ususan.

Unlike the Pasig raid which led to the arrest of over 300 people, no one was arrested in Taguig as the area, which the operatives stormed at 3:30 a.m., was deserted.

"We are 99 percent sure that the suspects were tipped off about the raid," Obong said.

Like the compound of shabu dens in Pasig City, the drug den in Taguig also had its own set of rules scribbled on walls: "Ang hihigop, bawal ang kalat," "Bawal ang pulis dito" and "Papatayin ang police asset dito."

Recovered from the compound were drug paraphernalia such as tooters and pipes, aluminum foil, assorted lighters, scissors and five sachets of methamphetamine hydrochloride or shabu which, as of press time, were being examined at the police crime laboratory.

Obong said that to get to the drug den, one had to get on a boat which can carry seven people. It takes seven to 10 minutes to cross the creek, he added.

Obong observed that the area where "customers" boarded boats was very well lighted unlike the drug den across the creek.

"It seemed that they deliberately made the street overlooking the drug den bright so that they could see whoever is coming," he told the INQUIRER.

Quoting a police informer, Obong said drug traders go to the compound, owned by a certain Ronnie Castro, to get their drug supply for their customers. Drug users also frequent the area for pot sessions. "The police are going to closely monitor Castro," Obong added.

The Taguig Anti-Crime and Illegal Drugs Task Force, led by Councilor Henry Duenas and the city's DEU, are) keeping an eye on two more drug "hot spots" in the city, he said.

Revival of 'democracy walls' pushed

By Tarra V. Quismundo

LOOKING FOR AN OUTLET FOR YOUR pent-up emotions?

Write it on this wall.

An official of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) has pushed for the revival of "democracy walls"—perimeter walls of public and private buildings where people can post their sentiments, be they rants or raves.

MMDA Metropolitan Sanitation Management Office (MSMO) Executive Director Liwanag Godinez made the proposal in a letter last month to MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando in a move to discourage vandalism in the metropolis.

"Democracy walls were conceptualized to minimize, if not totally eradicate, unsightly writings on walls and fences, including graffiti and illegal postings of messages anywhere in the area," Godinez said.

The MMDA had designated democracy walls at 10 areas around the metropolis, including the National Statistics Offices on East and Quezon Avenues in Quezon City, the Manila Central University near the Bonifacio Monument Circle in Caloocan City, the Ramon Magsaysay High School in Cubao, Quezon City; the SM Megamall in Mandaluyong City, and the San Carlos Seminary on Edsa in Makati City.

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FACTORY OUTLET

ABC-5, union talks end in deadlock; strike threat up

By DJ Yap

THE UNION OF TV NETWORK ABC-5 is in a deadlock with management over its Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), with the possibility of a strike looming in the horizon.

As the network celebrated its 14th anniversary yesterday, the ABC-5 Employees Union (ABCEU) appealed to management to listen to their demands, particularly over "political" provisions, like security of tenure or employee protection, in the five-year CBA.

ABCEU president Carlos Jizmundo said the union had filed a notice of strike with the Department of Labor and Employment, which would lapse tomorrow. The deadlock resulted from a manifestation by employees that union and management should go to the negotiation table as "social partners" unassisted by lawyers.

Management, however, insisted on lawyers being present during the negotiation to make it easier for both parties. If the standoff continues after the one-week mandatory waiting period, the 192-strong union might just push through with a strike, Jizmundo warned at a press conference yesterday in Quezon City.

Despite the threat of a strike, ABC-5 management reaffirmed its intention "to continue the CBA negotiations in good faith." A statement sent to the INQUIRER said that management is committed to "a fair and speedy conclusion" of the negotiations.

"We still want to conclude the CBA negotiations at the earliest, reasonably possible time, so that together, we at ABC can channel all our energies to building a better, stronger television network," it added.

In response to the strike notice, ABC-5 management filed a petition for assumption of jurisdiction and certification for compulsory arbitration in the DOLE. If granted, it would give the agency authority over CBA talks.

METROBRIEFS

Prosecutor's son shot in the head

A SON of a Quezon City assistant prosecutor was shot in the head by two gunmen in front of his house on Monday. Andrew Jurado, 23, son of Assistant Prosecutor Alessandro Jurado, is now in critical condition at the Far Eastern University Hospital. The police said the younger Jurado was standing in front of his house on Gilmore St., Barangay Kaligayahan in Novaliches at 5:30 p.m. when two men on motorcycles shot him. He was rushed to the Bernardino Hospital before being moved to the FEU Hospital, PO2 Bong Quintero said in a report. "He is now under observation. He's in critical condition but we're hopeful he'll make it," said the elder Jurado in an interview yesterday. The suspects probably got in a fight with his son and wanted to get even, he added. Investigators are now working on a lead given by witnesses, police said. The elder Jurado said he doubted if the shooting had something to do with his own job as a prosecutor, since he had not received any death threats.

DJ Yap

Alabang Skywalk project takes off

PARA SA INYO ITO- DEAR PEDESTRIANS !

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

THE MUNTINLUPA City government plans to implement the Alabang Skywalk project, a network of elevated walkways, from the stretch of Montilliano Street, traversing the Alabang viaduct, and ultimately connecting with the Alabang Market and the Liwasan Park. "The project is aimed at reviving the Alabang triangle as a center for business and a viable commercial district by decongesting traffic in the area," Mayor Jaime Fresnedi said in an interview with the INQUIRER. With eight escalators and a 24-hour security staff, the Skywalk will be a safer alternative for pedestrians who usually cross the main thoroughfare under the Alabang viaduct, Fresnedi added. It will also be lined with food and shopping stalls. The P279-million project, which was presented to the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority in a council meeting with mayors last week, will be shouldered by a private company, Neil Tavu and Associates, said Fresnedi. He expressed optimism that work on the project can begin in June once it is approved by the National Economic and Development Authority.

Jocelyn R. Uy

Students' exposure to mercury probed

OFFICIALS of a school in Parañaque City have declared a week-long holiday to allow health officials to investigate the alleged exposure of students and teachers to mercury last week. Eleven freshmen students of St. Andrew's School were taken to the Philippine General Hospital (PGH) after they showed signs of mercury exposure following a science experiment on Thursday. Dr. Olga Virtusio, City Health Office (CHO) head, told the INQUIRER yesterday, the students developed skin irritation or rashes. According to Virtusio, the teacher was discussing mercury with 80 students when some of them started playing with the chemical which was in an open beaker, causing some of it to spill. Four of the affected students were discharged from the hospital yesterday. The DOH, the CHO, PGH and the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) were investigating the incident while doctors were testing blood samples of students to assess the extent of exposure, said Virtusio. Health officials, meanwhile, advised students, teachers, other school staff and even visitors who might have unknowingly been exposed to the substance to report symptoms such as vision impairment, numbness, lack of coordination of movements, muscle weakness, skin rashes, mood swings and memory loss.

Jocelyn R. Uy

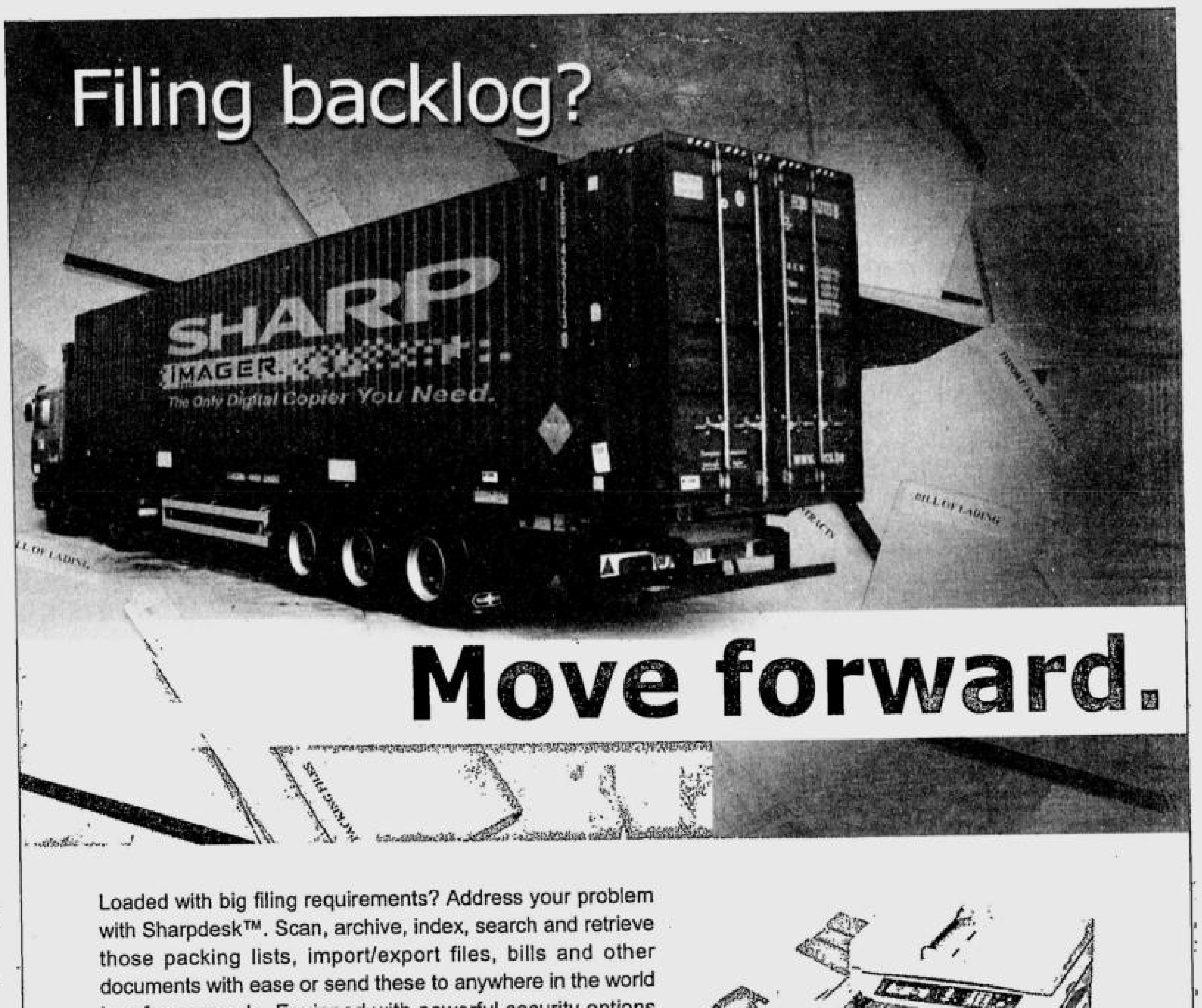
Kin raise questions about McDo shooting

THREE weeks after the shooting incident at the McDonald's restaurant on Taft Avenue that left two of its managers dead, the family of the assistant manager who allegedly shot his superior remain doubtful about the manner of his death. "We could not believe that he could kill his superior and commit suicide," Jo Perez said of her cousin, Luis Perez, who allegedly shot McDonald's manager, Olive Fernandez, a few minutes before a staff meeting on Feb. 3. Jo said her cousin and Fernandez were very close, and that Perez was "very protective of his friend." Jo also pointed out that the paraffin test on Perez yielded negative results, showing that her cousin may not have fired the gun. Investigators at the Manila Police District Homicide Section, however, said there were many cases of suicide victims who also tested negative for gunpowder traces.

Margaux C. Ortiz

Seminar on prayer meetings

THE INSTITUTE for Pastoral Development (IPD), is inviting leaders of Christian communities, prayer or worship groups to a one-day seminar-workshop on "Leading Prayer Meetings Effectively." The facilitator is Eliseo Lademora, a leader of the Ang Ligaya ng Panginoon Community and former IPD executive director. The seminar will be held on Saturday, Feb. 25, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Upper Penthouse Function Room, BSA Mansions, 108 Benavides St. (near AIM), Legaspi Village, Makati. Fee is P500. For details, please call Pet Carcillar at 8401585 and 8405038.



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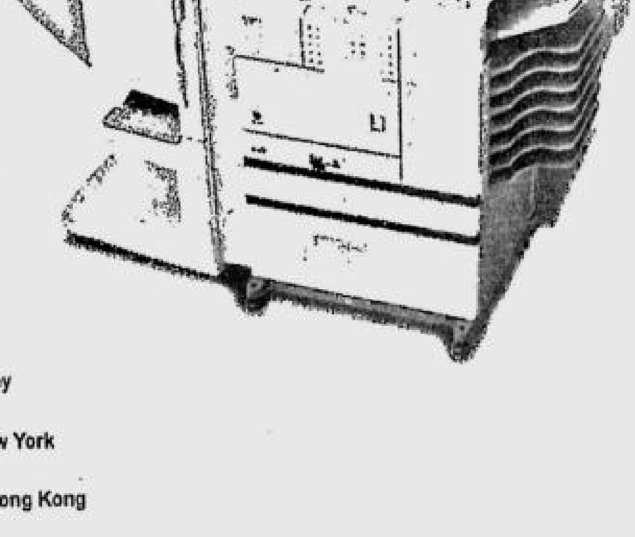

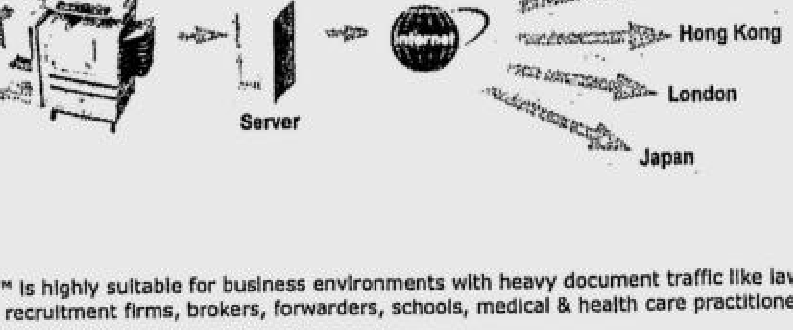

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NBI holds 4 vans with explosive loads

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIgation (NBI) intercepted four container vans carrying explosive materials at the Manila North Harbor yesterday afternoon, a day after its top official placed the bureau on red alert status.

NBI Special Task Force (STF) Regional Director Reynaldo Esmeralda said the container vans contained 1,500 sticks of dynamite; 372,087 kg of ammonium nitrate; 7,500 pieces of electric blasting caps; 7,500 pieces of non-electric blasting caps; 3,750 pieces of connectors; 375,000 pieces of ordinary blasting caps; 375,000 meters of safety fuse; and 75,000 meters of detonating cord.

Esmeralda explained that NBI officer in charge Nestor Mantaring had issued a memorandum order on Monday directing all agents and special investigators to be on the alert following reports of a possible coup attempt against the government.

"We have constantly been receiving reliable intelligence reports about a possible coup d'état against the administration by some disgruntled elements of the military, especially the Magdalo soldiers, and members of the Young Officers Union of the New Generation," Esmeralda said.

He added that bureau operatives and members of the Manila Police District Explosives and Ordnance Division conducted yesterday's operation at the two Manila piers in connection with the red alert directive.

According to Esmeralda, they had received a call from an informant regarding the large volume of ammonium nitrate, a major ingredient in bomb-making normally used as a soil nutrient and mango flower inducer, that was supposed to be shipped to Naga, Cebu, from Batangas province.

The NBI official said they intercepted the 20-footer and three 10-footer container vans at the two piers.

"The shippers failed to produce documents permitting them to transport such dangerous materials," Esmeralda said, adding that they would subject the cargo to verification procedures.

While ammonium nitrate could be used as fertilizer, the presence of blasting caps showed the substance could be used for dynamite fishing, he pointed out. "We often catch illegal fishing groups using dynamite and ammonium nitrate as explosives in Talisay, Cebu," Esmeralda, a former Central Visayas regional director, said.

Police chief out of EPD in 'minor' reshuffle

By Luige A. del Puerto
and Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

NEARLY TWO WEEKS AFTER THE DISCOVery of a compound of shabu restaurants in Pasig City, the chief of the Eastern Police District (EPD) has been relieved.

Police authorities, however, did not say if Chief Supt. Oscar Valenzuela's removal was a result of the discovery on Feb. 10 of the "shabu dens" in Sitio Mapayapa in Barangay Sto. Tomas, less than a kilometer away from the Pasig City Hall and the EPD headquarters.

His relief, according to a police statement, was part of a minor reshuffle involving nine offices in the Philippine National Police.

Chief Supt. Charlemagne Alejandrino, former deputy chief of the Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management, has been appointed as Valenzuela's replacement.

The EPD is in charge of maintaining peace and order in the cities of Marikina, Pasig, Mandaluyong and the town of San Juan.

Still no word from compound owner

Meanwhile, the Pasig City government has yet to get in touch with the owner of the lot where the shabu restaurants were found. City Legal Officer Carlos Abesamis said that until yesterday, the owner had yet to talk to them.

"We will recommend the inclusion of the owner of the lot in the charges to the Philippine National Police," Abesamis said.

Pasig City Mayor Vicente Eusebio also said they were thinking of going to court in order to confiscate the property, where he plans to build a "drug rehabilitation center."

Two land titles covering parts of Sitio Mapayapa in Barangay Sto. Tomas had been traced to a certain Amin Imam Boratong.

Abesamis sent Boratong a letter on Feb. 14 to inform him of, and invite him to, the demolition of the shabu mart—composed of several shanties—on his private lot, which pushed through on Feb. 15.

Although the letter was received by Boratong's friends, he has yet to send a reply.

Based on copies of the land titles given to the INQUIRER, Boratong bought the lot from the Santos family in August 2005.

Four members of the Santos family owned the lot from 1993 until the land title was transferred to Boratong's name last year, according to records from the City Registry of Deeds.

Eusebio mulls libel raps vs rival

Eusebio also lashed back at his political rival, Rep. Roberto Jaworski Jr., who had linked him to the operation of the drug dens.

"We are studying the filing of libel charges against him," he told reporters.

He said the allegations against him were plain politicking as he showed copies of an alleged manifesto being circulated in the city supposedly urging Jaworski to run for mayor next year.

The manifesto, in the form of a signature campaign addressed to Jaworski, was signed by politicians, many of whom lost in local elections in 2004.

Eusebio said he received a copy of the manifesto just the other afternoon.

"Look at the timing," he said. But the mayor did not discount the possibility of running for reelection next year.

There are talks that Jaworski and Eusebio's son, Bobby, are both aiming for the mayoral post next year.

Drug tests for police operatives

In another development, eight police drug operatives in the Camanava (Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas, Valenzuela) area have volunteered to be tested for drugs.

Northern Police District director Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil said the drug test, which will be administered to the district's Anti-Illegal Drugs team, is a precautionary measure to "tune up the main team of the anti-drugs campaign."

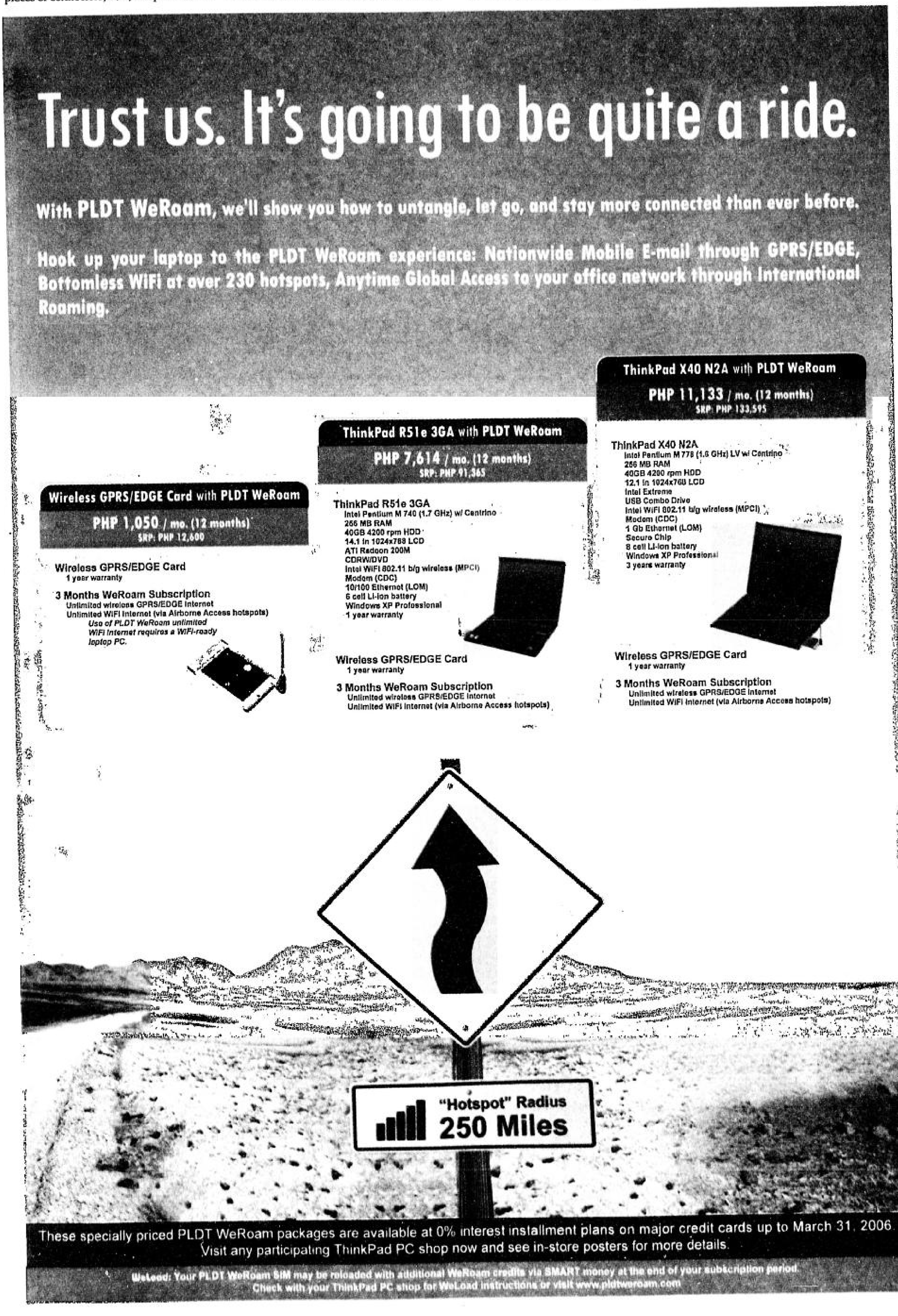
"A drug test must be conducted within 24 hours for all members to set the tone and give operatives the moral ascendancy in doing their jobs," Bataoil said in his order to the head of the team, Chief Insp. Bong Tarnate.

Bataoil said he is validating unverified reports of illegal drug dens operating in the Camanava area.

He urged barangay officials and residents, meanwhile, to immediately report to local authorities any illegal activity in their area.

"A similar situation as that in Pasig City, where illegal drugs were openly sold and used for years, must not be tolerated," Bataoil said.

With Nancy C. Carvajal



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FEBRUARY 22, DAY ONE

By PDI Research

(Editor's Note: The following chronology was distilled from books and PDI archives, about events leading up to what has been called the "real" Edsa.)

FEBRUARY 22, 1986 DAY ONE

Midnight

Defense Secretary Juan Ponce Enrile and key aides finalize Enrile's speech in which he will proclaim himself head of a ruling junta after rebel troops led by the Reform the Armed Forces Movement (RAM) assault Malacañang. Assault is planned for Feb. 23 at 2 a.m.

2 a.m.

Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Fabian Ver fortifies Palace, having been informed of impending coup by Maj. Edgardo Doromal of the Presidential Security Command.

Doromal was tapped by RAM to serve as a spy in the Palace but he later confessed to his commander, Col. Irwin Ver, son of the AFP chief, and agreed to become a double agent.

3 a.m.

At a meeting at Enrile's Dasmariñas house in Makati, RAM chief Col. Gregorio Honasan learns that a Marine battalion is positioned exactly at rebels' planned point of attack.

9 a.m.

On Ver's instruction, Metropolitan Command officer Col. Rolando Abadilla tries to talk Honasan out of any rash action.

10 a.m.

Honasan learns that more soldiers are being deployed to guard Palace. Trade Minister Roberto Ongpin calls Enrile to say that his 19 security men have been arrested. Enrile worries because three were on loan from him and knew of coup plot.

Noon

In Malacañang, President Marcos meets with US Ambassador to the Philippines Stephen Bosworth and Philip Habib, US President Ronald Reagan's "trouble-shooter." The two Americans note worsening political crisis and push for Ver's removal from office.

Honasan and Lt. Col. Eduardo Kapunan arrive at Enrile's house; they tell him of orders to round up all members of their movement. Between hiding in Cagayan Valley and regrouping for possible stand-off, Enrile chooses the latter and tells everyone to go to Camp Aguinaldo.

12:45 p.m.

Capt. Ricardo Morales, one of Imelda's security officers, surveys the Palace defenses and attempts to withdraw firearms from the Presidential Security Unit armory. He is accosted and becomes the first of four alleged assassins arrested by Marcos forces. The others are Maj. Saulito Aromin, Lt. Col. Jake Malajacan and Maj. Ricardo Brillantes.

2 p.m.

Before boarding his plane out of Manila, Habib told a US Embassy officer to tell Bosworth that Aquino won the election and "deserves our support. Marcos is finished, and we ought to offer him asylum in the US."

Enrile and RAM discuss how to cover up their coup plot in order to drum up support for themselves. Enrile calls AFP vice chief Gen. Fidel Ramos, who declares his full support.

3 p.m.

Honasan gives signal to prepare his men for combat. He, Enrile and Kapunan fly to Aguinaldo in a chopper.

3:30 p.m.

At Aguinaldo, Enrile's guards bring out brand-new M-16s, Uzis and Galils. Enrile orders troop deployment around Camp Crame. On the phone, he tells his wife Cristina to call INQUIRER founding chair Eugenia Apostol to apprise her of what's happening and request her to inform Jaime Cardinal Sin.

4:30 p.m.

THE DIE IS CAST. At Camp Aguinaldo, Enrile and Ramos declare their break from Marcos despite having only 500 men at the time and with no air, armor or artillery equipment.

Brig. Gen. Salvador Mison's Regional Unified Command No. 8, which includes First Lady Imelda Marcos' native Leyte, expresses support for the rebels—the first military region to do so.

5 p.m.

Unaware of unfolding events, Ver and Imelda attend wedding of a general's son at Villamor Air Base. Ver is stunned when told. Marcos calls his three children to Malacañang. Enrile tells Sin: "I will be dead within one hour. I don't want to die … If it is possible, do something. I'd still like to live."

6 p.m.

Ramos arrives at Aguinaldo after dialogue in his Alabang house with group called Cory Crusaders.

6:45 p.m.

Ramos and Enrile hold press conference to announce withdrawal of support from Marcos. They say they are not out to seize power but to return it to the people in the person of Corazon Aquino, whom they recognize as the rightfully elected President.

They have less than 500 men and no air, armor or artillery equipment.

Ramos moves to Crame across the street from Aguinaldo. Former AFP chief Romeo Espino, Brig. Gen. Ramon Farolan and Postmaster General Roilo Golez arrive at Aguinaldo.

7 p.m.

Marcos remains in Palace study room with Fabian and Irwin Ver and Information Minister Gregorio Cendaña.

8:15 p.m.

Ver orders military intelligence chief Brig. Gen. Fidel Singson to destroy Radio Veritas. Singson deploys men but orders them not to take offensive action. He prepares to join Ramos-Enrile forces.

9 p.m.

Enrile ends phone conversation with Ver, with both adversaries agreeing not to attack tonight

9:30 p.m.

Col. Antonio Sotelo of Air Force 15th Strike Wing readies all five attack helicopters at Villamor in support of defectors.

10 p.m.

Radio Veritas continues with blow-by-blow account of rebellion. Enrile and Aquino, who is secured in the Carmelite convent in Cebu City, have brief phone conversation. (Aquino had known of Enrile's coup plans.)

In Malacañang, Imelda tells reporters of plot to kill her and Marcos at 12:30 a.m.

10:20 p.m.

August Twenty-One Movement's Agapito "Butz" Aquino, despite his group's decision to wait, throws his support behind rebels and calls on volunteers to meet him at Isetann department store in Cubao preparatory to marching to Edsa.

(Shortly after) Over Radio Veritas, Sin calls for public support of Enrile and Ramos.

10:30 p.m.

Marcos announces over government-owned Channel 4 that he is in total control of situation and calls on Enrile and Ramos "to stop this stupidity and surrender so that we may negotiate." He reports the thwarting of an attempt on his life by one of Imelda's bodyguards in a conspiracy involving Enrile and Ramos and then proceeds to present the alleged assassin, Morales, who reads a supposed confession.

Nuns and seminarians of Bandila, a moderate coalition, are first to form human barricade around Crame. Superstar Nora Aunor arrives at Edsa.

Food starts arriving in response to Enrile's appeal that while they are ready to die for country, they have no food for the troops.

11 p.m.

Enrile tells Marcos over Radio Veritas: "Enough is enough, Mr. President. Your time is up. Do not miscalculate our strength now."

Kris Aquino, then disco-hopping, is found after frantic search and reunited with her mother; both are taken to Carmelite convent.

11:30 p.m.

Ver orders power and water lines at Aguinaldo and Crame cut, but he is ignored.

Crowd at Edsa swells.

Officials who withdraw support for Marcos: Lt. Col. Jerry Albano and his Security and Escort Battalion of 200 officers and men. ***(To be continued)***

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THE PEOPLE

The girl who didn't go to the mall

By May R. Vargas

UNTIL NOW I WAS WONDERING what would draw a 7-year-old girl to a tumultuous scenario like Edsa 1.

My mother was apprehensive about letting me go with my father, bribing me with going to the mall instead.

But there was something ablaze in my father's eyes, just as in everybody else's in our community, that made me stand my ground and say that I would go to Edsa, no matter how vague that word was to me then.

So I boarded one of the jeepneys that our neighbors arranged for that special event.

Ours was a small barangay in the heart of Las Piñas which, according to my father, was never cowed by Marcos's band of despotic soldiers.

One of my favorites from among his stories was how the formerly warring community gangs would team up to escape the soldier's guile and cruelty, or to some extent, actually disarm them and give them a dose of their own medicine.

And so with agitation burning in their hearts, the men and the women tracked that road that led us to Luneta where the Filipino people, as one nation struck that one big blow against the dictator who as I learned years later, had stolen the Filipino peoples' wealth, and tortured thousands of freedom fighters and activists.

Yellow was the dominant color that day and even our jeepney was suddenly brimming with yellow banners, adorned instantly by people who were only too eager to see that more people had come.

I also remember having to lie flat on the jeepney's floor because even before we could take off, stones flew in our direction, hitting some of my neighbors in the head. My father had me go with another family and for some time we sat by the baywalk and ate hotdogs.

I was totally unaware of what was really happening but the energy emanating from the crowd kept me wanting to be within the crowd no matter how dangerous it might be for a young girl.

But my father came later to fetch me, seemingly agreeing to my yearning to be part of history.

With very little understanding yet of what I was seeing, I saw nuns fainting and being carried away to ambulances on stretchers, I remember my feet being lifted from the ground, carried off to this point and that.

I was scared to hell but the people's movements had a rhythm one dared not break away from. The crowd was pushing, pulling, chanting and waving as if drunk with some intoxicating victory. A song united everyone and I remember singing that song on and off a few days, weeks and even years after.

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Almonte tips off Cory camp on coup

From page A1

for a civil disobedience campaign in a massive rally at the Luneta. Here, she presented a seven-point strategy that included the boycott of products and establishments owned by Marcos cronies. The climax was a nationwide strike on Marcos's swearing-in on Feb. 26.

But there was already a more active and potent action going on in the Armed Forces. A coup d'etat had been in the works by the Reform the Armed Forces Movement or RAM. Its plans had been finalized and the soldiers were set to go.

Cojuangco himself had been in contact with the RAM leaders like Almonte and Colonels Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan, Vic Batac and Red Kapunan.

Ruling junta

The RAM meetings gave Cojuangco insights into the unrest within the military. It also gave him an idea of the mind-set of these soldiers.

"I think we agreed that we were fighting (for) the same cause. But their idea was for a revolutionary government headed by a junta," Cojuangco said.

It was to be composed of Aquino, her vice presidential candidate Salvador Laurel, Cardinal Jaime L. Sin, Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile, Gen. Fidel Ramos and former Executive Secretary Alex Melchor.

"I don't know why Melchor was included. Anyway, this was the idea and we would talk about it for hours and hours in my house or in prearranged meeting places. We would talk till the wee hours of the morning," Cojuangco said.

"Sometimes I asked them, 'Why do we have to go into a junta? We have a parliament and we have friends there. No. No junta. That would cause trouble.'

"But they were firm about it. It must be a junta first. Then we will draw up a constitution and have an election two years later. That was their proposal and I totally disagreed with it. I didn't want our country to be a banana republic. We do it this way, we are no better than some of the Latin American countries. And our talks would go round and round. And we never really reached a conclusion."

Strange relationship

The meetings would begin a strange relationship between RAM and the Marcos opposition. A form of trust had already developed. RAM had provided additional security for Aquino during the election campaign.

Almonte wanted Aquino to stay at the Cojuangco residence on Palm Avenue in exclusive Dasmariñas Village, Makati.

"I can immediately send a battalion of Marines from (Fort) Bonifacio once the action starts," he told Peping. "They can quickly rush in to secure Cory."

Cojuangco immediately called Aquino and suggested that the trip to Cebu be called off. But Aquino was adamant. "We already gave our word," she said.

Cojuangco called Almonte and told him about Aquino's decision. Almonte proposed a backup plan. "OK," he told Cojuangco, "if that is the case, I'll try to arrange some security there for her." He gave Cojuangco a contact—a colonel—in Cebu.

They were about to leave on Feb. 21, a Friday, when Lt. Jose Honrado Jr., Aquino's godson and chief security officer of Hacienda Luisita, paid a visit. Honrado was anxious about her leaving and explained why.

"He wasn't a RAM member but he already knew about the plot and was part of it," Cojuangco said. "He told me, 'We move on Sunday, 2 a.m.'"

But realizing that Aquino was set on leaving, Honrado gave instructions on what she should do once RAM moved. Once the rebels attacked Malacañang, Aquino was to be kept hidden in Cebu until 9 a.m. Sunday. If things went right, the Palace would have been taken over and secured by the soldiers by then. He would immediately call Cojuangco once the coast was clear so she could return to Manila.

What to do if the coup failed?

He didn't say what she should do then.

The first reports of the Enrile-Ramos breakaway came while Aquino's boycott campaign was under way in Cebu.

Phone call to Enrile

In the house of a supporter, Aquino managed to call Enrile at Camp Aguinaldo. Their conversation was brief. Aquino offered prayers for Enrile. But Cojuangco was thinking fast. Aquino's safety was foremost in his mind.

"There are places they could go to but it was up to Cory to decide. Blaine Porter, the American consul general in Cebu, had paid a visit and with instructions from US Ambassador Stephen Bosworth offered the security of a US Navy frigate to Cory until the crisis had passed," Cojuangco said.

"I talked with her. Just the two of us," he said. "I told her, 'We have three choices. One you will stay here in Cebu and accept the offer of the navy frigate for your safety. Two, they (Marcos's men) know our movements here so we fly to Malaysia ... Or, third, we fly back to Manila."

Staying with the Americans was, for Aquino, a "bad image" to the people. Running away from trouble was far from her mind. "We go back to Manila," she said.

Convent as refuge

"So we hid her in a monastery (the Convent of the Pink Sisters) until the next day ... Cory was already impatient to leave but I told her to wait."

Cojuangco was waiting for his RAM contacts for assurances that RAM could secure Aquino. He was told that it was not possible.

While Aquino and the leaders of the opposition held a press conference at the Mactan Hotel, Peping was in a room briefing the two pilots who were to fly them to Manila.

Security for Aquino in Manila soon became the greatest concern for the opposition once people began to gather at Edsa. She and her companions stayed at her sister Josephine's house at Wack Wack in Mandaluyong, awaiting developments. But Aquino wanted to go elsewhere.

"She went on radio and called on the people to be there," Peping remembers. "It was then I realized that Cory wanted to go to Edsa."

Cojuangco remembers that Colonel Almonte had told him not to bring Aquino to Edsa because it was dangerous.

"There were snipers all around and she could get killed. When I told her about this and was trying to convince her not to go, she told me, 'I invited the people then I wouldn't go? Fix it.'"

Edsa appearance

A secure spot was chosen for Aquino to make her appearance. It was at the corner of Ortigas Avenue and Edsa, where the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA) building was. At that time, the only buildings in the area tall enough for snipers to nest in were the Securities and Exchange Commission office and a few more structures farther down Edsa.

A team led by Cojuangco's right-hand man, Tommy Henson, made a security sweep of the surrounding buildings and traced an escape route in case of trouble. But the arrangements were taking time and it wasn't long before Cojuangco faced an impatient Aquino.

Being at Edsa was Aquino's immediate thought. She stormed out to a parked car in the driveway and ordered the driver to go to Edsa.

Cojuangco was right behind her. The driver looked at Aquino, then at Cojuangco, waiting for the order. This time, it was the younger brother who gave the final order. He gave the driver a firm head shake. No. Aquino had to wait. She walked back to the house. It would take a bit more time before Cojuangco would give the go-signal to go to Edsa.

At 4 p.m., Feb. 24, Aquino made her first appearance with the people at Edsa since the revolution began. A makeshift stage was set up on the front steps of the POEA building along with a sound system.

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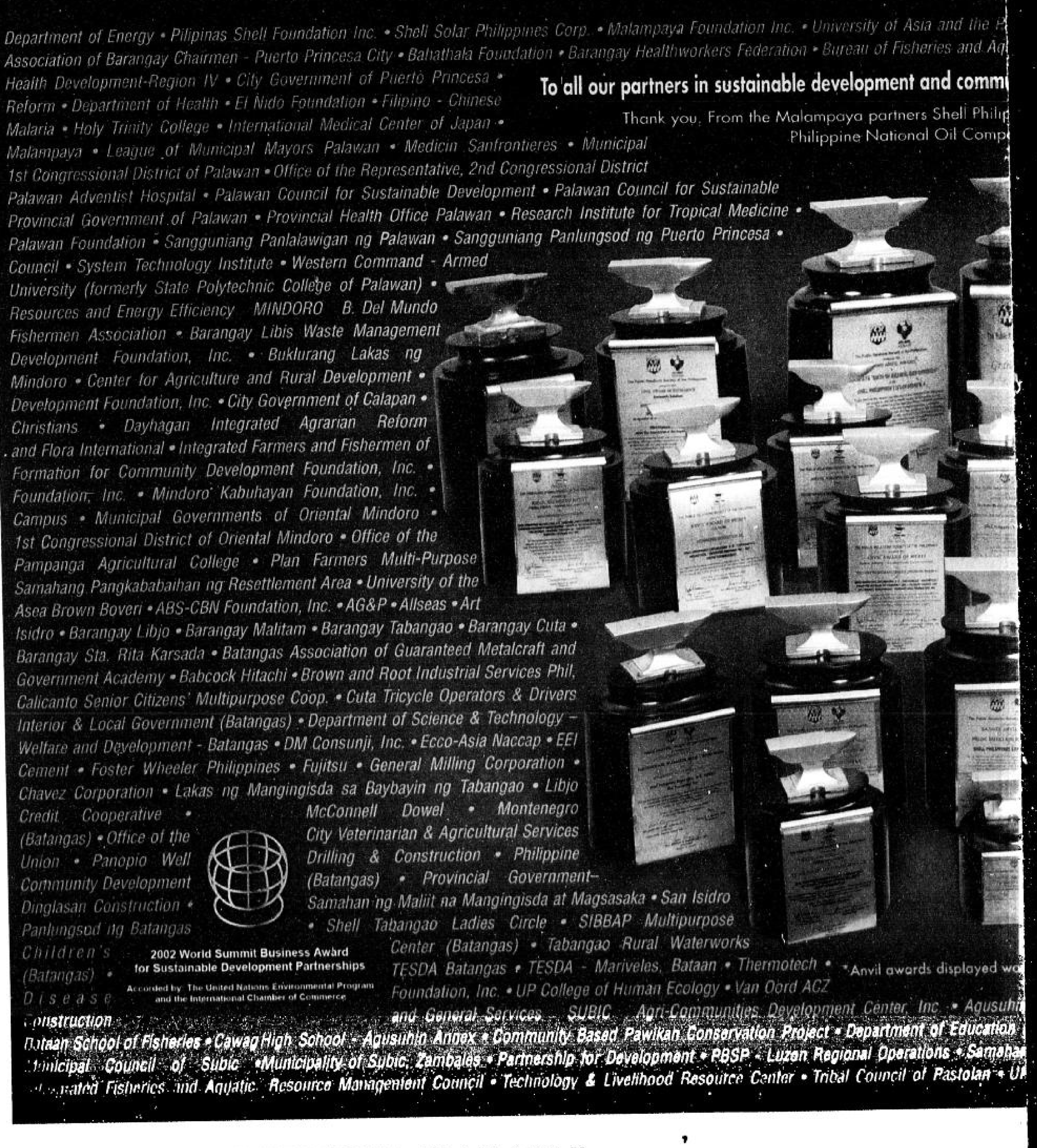

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THE PALACE

Marcos would not leave; his family refused to leave him

From page A1

the USS M. Cluskey, the USS Sacramento, the USS Obriendo and the USS Puller were "anchored at the US sea base."

US Secretary of State George Schultz said the US forces "should maintain reinforcements over the horizon to protect the US bases in the Philippines." The reinforcements came from the ships of the US 7th Fleet.

Transition government

But against whom or what was the US being protected?

The question must have been answered in part by the reports of Labor Minister Blas Ople and Acting Foreign Minister Pacifico Castro, who were sent to Washington on Feb. 20 to confer with White House officials.

The reports clearly indicated that Marcos "should give way to a transition government."

If Marcos refused to leave Malacañang, would the Marines of the US 7th Fleet have bombed him out?

With the elements of the US state department obviously geared to remove him from office, at least physically, Marcos still believed that his old friend, President Ronald Reagan, would help him.

But Schultz presented no alternatives. He said that if Marcos stayed and controlled the government through military force, "the semi police state imposed by Marcos would destroy the ability of [Corazon] Aquino and the Church to provide a democratic alternative to the communists. So we don't want this to happen."

That was the picture Schultz drew in order to assure Reagan that the best and only solution was to offer Marcos "decent treatment" once Marcos was taken out and brought to the United States.

It must be noted here that Schultz's "talking points" were explicit: America would "welcome" Marcos, period.

Washington prepared the procedure for Marcos's departure with Schultz directing the operations.

Schultz said: "The Marcos era has ended. Marcos can no longer govern effectively. An effort by him to remain in power by military force will destroy the democratic alternative to the communists. The US must find a way to support the democratic forces for change and to treat Marcos with respect and courtesy. We should be ready to bring him to the US."

Laxalt

Marcos had very little sleep over the past days.

On Feb. 25, at around 3 a.m., he called Laxalt. It was 2 p.m. on Feb. 24 in Washington.

The two men had become quite close.

Laxalt's first trip to the Philippines was in 1944 under Gen. Douglas MacArthur, as a 22-year-old Army medic attached to the 7th Division. He was part of the invasion forces that liberated the island of Leyte.

His second trip to the country was in October 1985, when he met with Marcos.

With Laxalt's introduction about his war experiences, he and Marcos established a common ground of sentimental memories.

They met for two consecutive days, with Ramos attending one of the meetings.

Laxalt recalled in a memoir: "President Marcos asked me whether the message he received from the White House calling for a peaceful transition to a new government was genuinely from President Reagan. I told him it was. I could not answer all his questions about what a peaceful transition would mean—whether, for example, it might permit some form of power sharing with Mrs. Aquino.

"President Marcos was terrified by reports that US Marines were on their way to join the rebels, though I checked with the President (Reagan) and Secretary (Casper) Weinberger and found that this was absolutely untrue."

Laxalt continued: "President Marcos had been up all night—it was 3 a.m. Manila time—and he was in a frightened and pugnacious mood. He said that he and his family, including his grandchildren, were holed up at the presidential palace.

"Despite growing defections from his army, President Marcos claimed that he had the support of 85 percent of the army, and said he was prepared to fight it out.

"The conversation frightened the daylights out of me, because I thought the last thing we needed in the Philippines was an ugly civil war. At the end of the conversation I implored him not to have unnecessary bloodshed until I had an opportunity to talk with the President (Reagan).

Welcome to US

"After the phone call, Secretary Schultz and I were driven to the White House, where we met with the President, Admiral John Pointdexter, the national security adviser, and White House chief of staff Donald Regan.

"The President said it would be impractical and undignified for Mr. Marcos to share power with Mrs. Aquino. But he told me to tell President Marcos 'he would be welcome in the United States if he saw fit to come here.'"

Imelda tried to get hold of Nancy Reagan. She wanted to make her own appeal to the US first lady whom she considered a friend.

In a 1990 interview with Ada Hos-Peles, Imelda admitted that when she called Mrs. Reagan after the Palace was bombed, Nancy said: "Come at once to the United States. We will protect you here."

Imelda answered, "I will be last person to leave the Philippines. Never!"

'Cut and cut cleanly'

But the die was cast. There was the packing that had to be done, and she also had to look into the preparations for the President's oath-taking that was scheduled for the morning.

She had her white terno prepared and suggested that her two daughters should also be dressed in white Filipiniana gowns. Bongbong did not change out of his soldier's camouflage uniform.

Marcos was to wear a barong Tagalog.

Senator Laxalt called at 5 a.m., barely two hours after Marcos' phone call.

Marcos asked whether President Reagan wanted him to resign, and Laxalt replied that he was not in a position to make that kind of representation.

Marcos asked him what he should do. The senator said it would be to the best interest of all if Marcos left.

"Cut and cut cleanly. The time has come," Laxalt said.

Marcos was silent for the longest time, and the senator had to ask if he was still there.

Marcos replied: "Yes... I am so very, very disappointed." And then he hung up.

"It is important to understand, too," Laxalt wrote in his memoir, "that [Marcos] didn't believe he was going to have to leave the country when he agreed to leave the Palace. He thought he was going home to northern Luzon."

Oath-taking

Ferdinand Marcos and Arturo Tolentino had actually taken their oaths of office as President and Vice President, respectively, inside the Study Room on Feb. 15. They took their oath before Chief Justice Ramon Aquino at 1 a.m., three hours after the Batasang Pambansa officially proclaimed them as the winners of the Feb. 7 snap election.

The public oath-taking on Feb. 25 was purely ceremonial and for the benefit of "live" media coverage. It was scheduled for 9 a.m. but was cut off the air. Rebel soldiers had taken over the last remaining TV channel that was broadcasting from Malacañang, and the microwave facilities were unplugged. They had captured the government station earlier and prevented any "live" broadcasts from the Palace.

Final appearance

After the oath of office at the Ceremonial Hall at 10 a.m., the Marcoses made their final appearance before the people who had waited anxiously at the Palace grounds.

The First Family walked to the Maharlika Building, which was connected by a private passageway to the private chambers in the Palace.

Marcos waved to the crowd and cleared his throat. There was thunderous applause and cheers of "Marcos, Marcos, Marcos pa rin!"

He was a portrait of pain. His address overflowed with emotion, but his slur and the constant cheering of the crowd blurred his words. He pleaded for sobriety and calm, tolerance in the heat of war, and promised that "we will overcome this crisis."

He gave a message of peace from the heart, offering his life and his honor all over again, "for the salvation of his country and his people."

The crowd waited for a call to arms, but it never came. They would have rallied behind him, willingly given their lives for him had he so much as hinted at it.

'Dahil Sa Iyo'

Imelda sang her signature song, "Dahil Sa Iyo," her voice choked by tears, her face masked with sadness.

There came a terror in her eyes that could not be contained. It spilled across her quivering lips, the feigned smile, and the vanquished look.

For one brief moment, she looked scared. And then she waved, opened her right palm and blew a kiss.

The events of the past days were beyond her control. When the inevitable time for departure approached, she must have been unprepared to leave, or perhaps did not have time enough to sort out what to take along.

Except for the crates of money, too many items were left behind. Only hours later, the walk-in vault of jewelry and piles of documents would be ransacked.

In a future affidavit, Marcos wrote: "While I am grateful to President Reagan for his hospitality in providing my family and my associates a safe haven, being brought to Hawaii was not a choice of mine. It was on orders of the United States government at the highest levels and totally inconsistent with my intentions then and my desire now to be in my own country."

Marcos as mother

Imelda's memory of her departure revolved around the river that they crossed at the back of the Palace toward the helicopters that flew them out of Manila.

The words of her husband; "This is all your fault, Imelda," had been reworked.

"Marcos added that it was because I gave him a heart," Imelda said. She said the reason Marcos did not attack the rebels was "because I made him a mother, like me, who can love her children even if they had done something wrong. In fact, that was his shining moment. He offered his life and his sacred honor to save his people because I gave him a heart."

But what is Imelda's "heart" like?

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Sugar Barons set out for first-ever double

By Musong R. Castillo

PAL Interclub chair Domingo Duerme hits the ceremonial drive at Apo Golf and Country Club in Davao on the eve of the men's regular tournament today at Palos Verdes. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

DAVAO CITY—THE BIGGEST motivations seem simple enough for Canlubang.

The most dominant team in the Philippine Airlines Interclub swings into action for a first-ever two-division sweep in a year when payback takes the back seat and the "future" of the Sugar Barons in the regular men's tournament is unveiled.

"Of course, winning again is the primary target," non-playing skipper Luigi Yulo said. "But after (winning the Seniors tourney) last week, our prime motivation is to go for a sweep."

The Sugar Barons, owners of 12 regular men's titles, won the division for 55 years old and above for the first time on Saturday.

And they will have to do it without one of the most familiar, if not the most dominant, fixtures in the team—Juvic Pagunsan—but with a roster that has a merry mix of youth and experience.

Former RP Amateur champ Jun Bernis will spearhead Canlubang in the first round of championship division play at the up-and-down Rancho Palos Verdes here.

National Caddies' Open products and team rookies Joseph and Mario Labajo, JR Tanpinco and Ronnie Torrecampo will debut for the Sugar Barons before action shifts to one of the toughest tests in local golf—Apo Golf Club—tomorrow.

Veteran Abe Rosal, RP team mainstay Jay Bayron, Boyet Saragoza, rookies Jonel Ababa and Mark Fernando complete the Canlubang roster.

"I wish Canlubang all the luck," said Thirdy Escano, captain of defending champion Southwoods. "Definitely, it's a formidable team. But we will defend our title the best way we can."

Escano said yesterday that team leaders have not made up its mind on who will open their title

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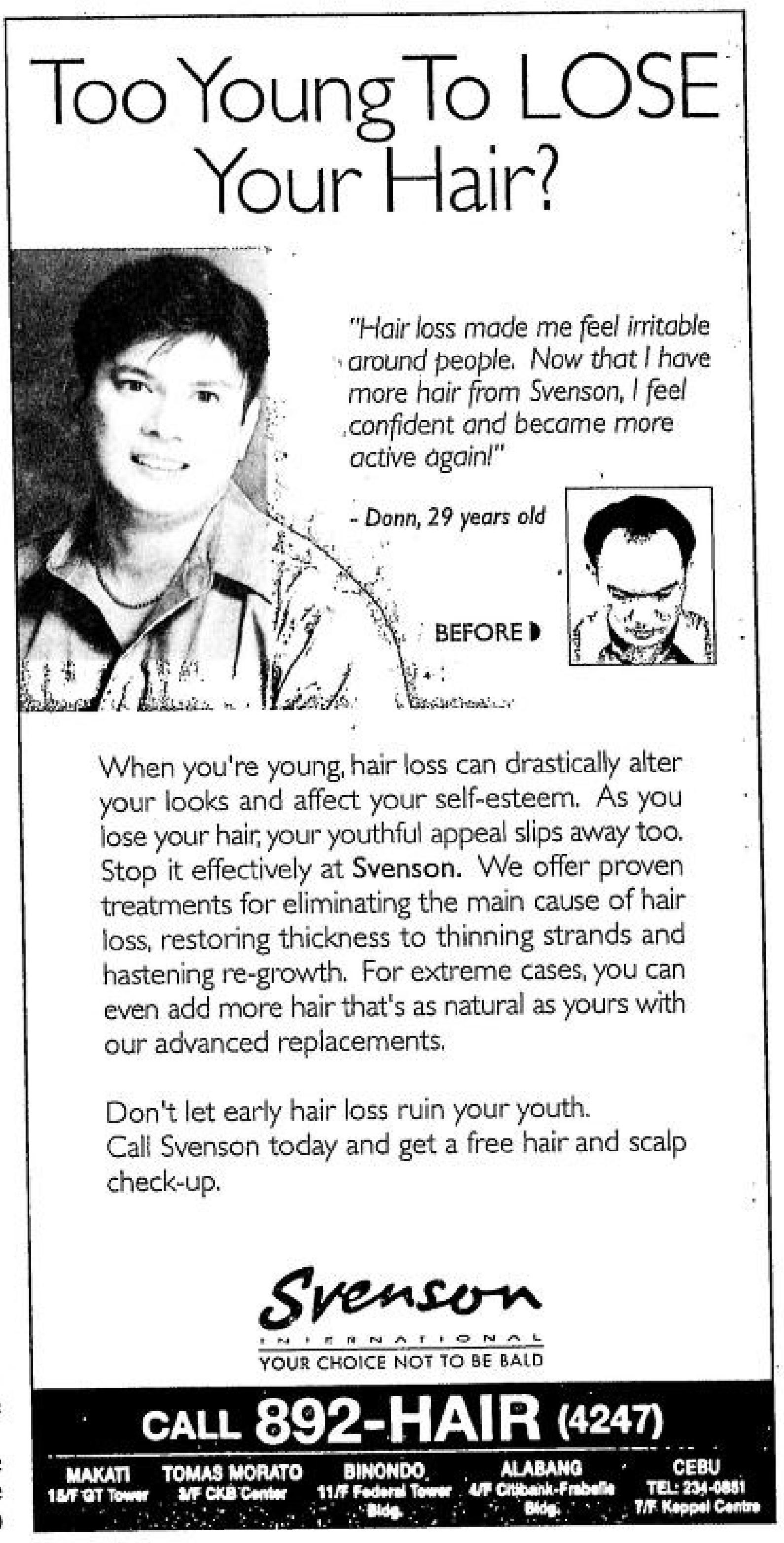

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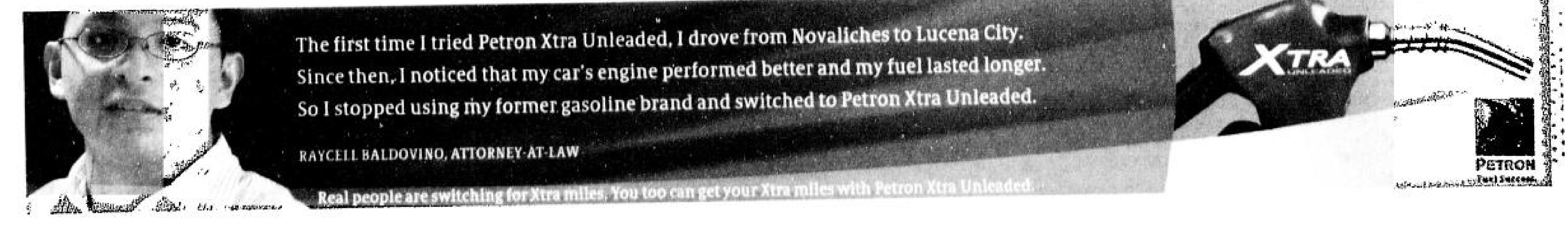

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Araneta amazes for NCR; Iloilo, Negros blank foes

By Cedelf P. Tupas
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—GROWING UP, IAN ARANETA SWEARS HE NEVER IMPOSED HIMSELF in the football field of Barotac Nuevo town. He was making his presence felt elsewhere.

But for 90 minutes yesterday, he stood out in the pitch where the finest players of the country started their careers.

Seeing action for title defenders National Capital Region, the 23-year-old Araneta put on a show on his homecoming, knocking in two goals in a 4-1 victory over Baguio at the start of the PFF-National Men's Open Championship here.

"I just tag along with the older players in town, so I was never really the king of this field," said Araneta, of the Philippine Air Force, who is actually one of 12 players in the NCR team who hail from Barotac Nuevo, the country's football hotbed about 25 km from Iloilo.

"They (older players) said I played well today."

Spanish midfielder Luis Lozano started the scoring for NCR, right at the opening minute, before Araneta's header off a Ruel Gener cross in the 5th minute made it 2-0.

The nifty NCR striker broke loose from an offside trap and beat the Baguio keeper on a one-on-one play in the 39th minute.

Another Barotac-born booter, Emilio Caligdong finished off Baguio three minutes from time with a left-footed rocket outside the box, after Izzeldin El Habib, one of three Sudanese playing for Baguio, had booted in his team's only goal in the 77th minute.

Meanwhile, Team Biscocho House-Iloilo drew a hat-trick from Dan Padernal and a double from Kenley Delgado in a convincing 5-0 win over Iligan in Bracket B in La Paz.

Tournament debutant North Cotabato blanked Zamboanga, 5-0 in Sta. Barbara.

Playing together as a team for the first time, Negros Occidental equaled Iloilo's impressive triumph with a 5-0 rout of Iligan.

"This is actually a practice game for us," Negros coach Freddie Lazarito said.

But cohesion was never a problem for Negros, which had five players scoring a goal each. And had it not been for the goal-posts, the team would have scored in double digits. Strikers Floriano Pasilan, Frederick Jan Serios and Jerome Orcullo were twice denied by the woodwork.

Serios opened the scoring in the 2nd minute with a tap-in after capitalizing on a misjudgment by the Masbate keeper.

A glancing header by Reydrick Viliran off an Orcullo free kick from the corner on the hour mark made it 2-0, before Pasilan, Orcullo and Dexter Dean Versario each made their contributions in the final 10 minutes.

Padernal got his hat-trick as early as the 37th minute, latching on a through ball from Reymund Juarez with a left-footed roller from five yards out, after scoring on a header in the 6th minute and a rare tap-in in the 34th.

Delgado produced the best goal of the tournament so far, pouncing on another Juarez pass with a one-touch volley in the 53rd minute, before finishing the scoring with a grounding right-footed strike three minutes from time.

NATIONAL Capital Region's Ali Borromeo weaves past an unidentified Baguio defender at the Barotac Nuevo pitch.

True blue Gordon bats for La Salle this time

GORDON

SEN. RICHARD GORdon may get a lot of ribbing from his fellow alumni for this.

The concurrent Red Cross chair turned from blue to green and urged De La Salle University to stay in the UAAP after the Taft-based school announced plans to withdraw following a recruitment scandal.

Gordon is an alumnus and staunch supporter of Ateneo, La Salle's fiercest collegiate rival.

"Only those responsible should be punished," said Gordon, who also urged the UAAP board to act with prudence on the La Salle case.

The Archers have submitted a petition to withdraw from the basketball competitions of the league after it was found that they fielded two ineligible players for two seasons, including the 2004 edition when they won the title.

La Salle had already offered to return the trophy to quell the controversy, sparked by the ineligibility of players Mark Benitez and Tim Gatchalian.

"It appears that the (La Salle) administration knew nothing about the fraud, and has acted responsibly in dealing with it once it was discovered," said Gordon.

"DLSU must stay with the league," he added. "The school itself is one of the premier educational institutions of the country, one that stands for excellence and lives for Christian and humanitarian values."

Gordon said the athletes will be hurt the most should La Salle push through with its decision.

Miñoza heads stellar cast in chase for ₱1.2M purse

BIG DRAW: Frankie Miñoza

FRANKIE MIÑOZA COMPLETES the tough cast gunning for the P1.2 million top prize in The Country Club Invitational which fires off tomorrow at TCC course in Canlubang, Laguna.

Although Miñoza could finish no better than joint 63rd in last week's Malaysian Open, the country's top shotmaker will surely add prestige to the P4 million tournament.

"Frankie will surely fire up the rest of the field," said Vince Villafuerte of the organizing Videocom. "We're expecting a shootout in the next four days."

Miñoza will also lead the field in the traditional pro-am event of the tournament put up by Enrique K. Razon Jr. to honor the memory of his father, Don Pocholo.

Meanwhile, reigning RP Ladies Open champion Debbie de Villa and national pool members Anya Tanpinco and Lora Roberto will also see action in the event as part of their preparations for international tournaments, including the Thailand Ladies Open set early next month.

Despite that sputtering windup in Kuala Lumpur, where he closed out with a 74 after two 69s, the battle-scarred Miñoza is actually enjoying a resurgence of sort last year after a couple of seasons in the doldrums.

A six-time winner in the rich Japan Tour, the 46-year-old Miñoza found his touch again with three top five finishes on the Asian Tour.

Knights corner semifinal berth

NCAA CHAMPION LETRAN TROUNCED ITS league counterpart from Southern Luzon, San Sebastian College-Recoletos of Cavite, 71-58, yesterday to clinch a semifinal seat in the collegiate division of the National Students Basketball Championships at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

The Knights applied a debilitating full court press to build a 60-47 spread at the end of the third period and coast to their third straight victory in as many outings.

Jonathan Aldave led all scorers with 16 as Letran arranged a meeting with Philippine Christian University, also 3-0, for Group A honors in a match that rekindles the NCAA 2005 finale.

UAAP titlist Far Eastern University dumped Manuel L. Quezon University, 83-68, for a third straight win that primed the Tamaraws for a pivotal game against University of Visayas, also 3-0, in Group B.

Lefty Jeffri Allan Chan led five double figure scorers from FEU with 16 as the Tamaraws braced for the return of their hottest star, Arwind Santos, who did not play in their first three games.

PCU marched into the semis of the tournament supported by San Miguel Corp., Petron, thirst quencher Aktivade and Molten basketball, by trouncing winless Cordillera College, 101-65.

UAAP juniors division champion La Salle-Zobel claimed the No. 2 slot in Group A after dumping Holy Child of Davao, 94-68, for its third win in four games. The PCU Baby Dolphins are unbeaten in three games at the EAC gym.

Flashy Arce ready to rumble with Viloria anywhere

THE MEGABUCK FIGHT THAT World Boxing Council light flyweight titlist Brian Viloria has been longing for against interim WBC flyweight champion Jorge Arce of Mexico may come sooner than expected.

This developed after Arce, who watched Viloria's first title defense against Mexican Jose Antonio Aguirre Sunday, expressed willingness to rumble with the Filipino-American anywhere.

"I'll fight Viloria even in his backyard," said Arce, conqueror of Filipinos Juanito Rubilliar (twice) and Jovan Presbitero.

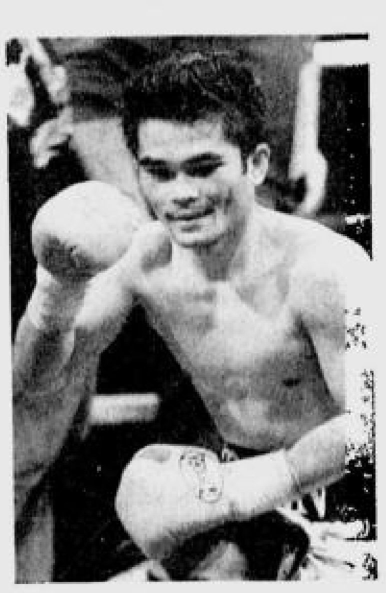
Viloria is also raring to go.

"He (Arce) is a great fighter," said Viloria. "Anyone who knows boxing knows that it would be an unbelievable fight. That's the kind of fight I want to be in. It's the kind of fight I have to be in."

Viloria's manager Gary Gittelsohn, however, prefers fighting World Boxing Organization minimumweight champion Ivan Calderon of Puerto Rico first.

One of the options is for Viloria to stake his title in Calderon's homeland.

Calderon sports a 25-0 record. He was nicknamed "Iron Boy" because of his endurance. The 31-year-old won 20 of his fights by unanimous decision.


VILORIA: Big-money prospects.

Sugar Barons set out for first-ever double

From page A29

defense. But he said Japanese youngsters Toru Nakajima and Michio Matsumura will play today.

Southwoods turned back a weekend charge by Canlubang to win by two points last year, and the stars of that dramatic victory are back in the fold, save for one.

Michael Bibat, who drilled in a six-foot birdie on the 18th hole of the Marapara in Bacolod to clinch the crown for Southwoods last year, will be back. But the title-holders will surely miss its star, Artemio Murakami, who turned pro at the start of the year like Pagunsan.

Tonlits Asistio, the long-hitting jungolfer best remembered in the tournament for punching an 80-yard shot from the tree-lined rough on the 18th fairway for eagle on the final day, is also back for another tour of duty for Southwoods.

And both are expected to see action when play shifts to Apo, which will also host Sportswriters and Friendship division action today and Friday.

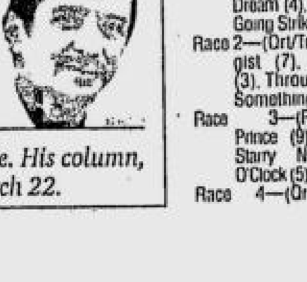
Del Monte, the 2004 winner, is given an equal chance like Canlubang and Southwoods.

Buboy Jaraulla, Paul and Jolan Miñoza, Louie Dacudao, Jett Plete and Iggy Clavecilla are the prominent members of Del Monte. Yoyong Velez is the playing captain.

Incidentally, it was determined in the captains' meeting yesterday morning that Cagayan de Oro will be the site of the 60th edition next year. Pueble de Oro in Cagayan de Oro and Del Monte will be the venues.

Major sponsors of the tournament are Action Asia, Airbus, Boeing, GE Aviation, GMA7, Honda Cars, Davao, INQ7.net, Joey 92.3, Royal Caribbean International, Philippine Amusements and Gaming Corp., People Asia, Premier Wines and Spirits, Rudy Project, UMBN and Uraya Land Development Corp. ABS-CBN International, Fortune Tobacco and Radio Mindanao Network are the corporate backers with 96.3 WRock, Asia Brewery, Century Park Hotel, Honda Megamotors, SM City Davao and Tanduay Rhum the other sponsors.

BARE EYE



Recab Trinidad

RECAH Trinidad is on leave. His column, Bare Eye, will be back on March 22.

SPORTSWATCH

stron par ershi
PG

PBA PARTNERS: PGA Cars Inc., sole distributor of Audi and Porsche in the Philippines, and Prudential Guarantee, the country's leading non-life insurer, have teamed up with the Philippine Basketball Association to help bring the sport to the next level. PBA director for marketing Jack Ruby, PGA Cars president Miguel Coyiuto, PBA commissioner Noli Eala and Prudential Guarantee AVP for marketing Anthony Sy sealed the partnership recently.

North Carolina quintet survives BSU

THE VISITING CROSSFIRE TEAM OF NORTH CAROLINA NIPPED BULACAN State University, 70-69, over the weekend at the Don Pedro S. Cayetano Sports Center in Balagtas, Bulacan, at the start of the Americans' five-game exhibition basketball tour in the country. Rondell Clark and Chuck Petterson scored 16 points apiece to lead the Crossfire dribblers who were invited here by the Christian Sports and Youth Development Center Inc. of Cabanatuan City, headed by Dominador B. Lumibao. BSU got double-digit scores from Rizalde Orillosa, who finished with 16 points; Aaron Sanchez, who added 12; and Jason Sta. Ana, who had 11. At halftime, Crossfire players Clark and Petterson held a slamdunk exhibition of Crossfire's Clark and Petterson. Sta. Ana was crowned three-point shootout champion.

FEU environment fun run Sunday

THE BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES DEPARTMENT OF FAR EASTERN UNIVERSITY will hold "Takbo-Lakad para sa Kalinisan at Kalikasan," a fun run for a clean and green environment, this Sunday. The fun run will start at 5 a.m. in front of the Quirino Grandstand and will traverse some of Manila's major roads before ending at the FEU campus on Morayta. More than 1,000 students, faculty members and staff will join the run which aims to raise funds for the school's Adopt-A-Hectare program in support of the rehabilitation of La Mesa Watershed through the Bantay Kalikasan Foundation. It also aims to raise people's level of awareness in solid waste management and to help in the city's clean-up drive.

Uy, Go, Arroyo-De Roca entries show way

FRANKIE UY'S FIREFLY 14, WILLIAM GO'S FIREFLY RM 13 AND RED CREEK III of Rep. Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo and Boy de Roca demolished their respective opponents to gain 3 points each and lead the qualifiers into tonight's championship round of the 5th National Cockers Association's 7-Cock Derby at the Roligon Mega Cockpit. The two pointers are Jade Resort Julianne LG of Armand Santos, Against All Odds of Gerry Ramos, Jimafer Mapalad JC of Jet Fernando, Red Creek I of Arroyo and Jeslie Palmares, Winpill of Mike Atayde, Lucky Rin Firefly Binangonan of Ric de Guzman, BR Fatman S Bacolor of Tony Tan and Firefly 100 RM. Ronnie Puno's Wild Wing Sundance, JV Magsaysay's RT Sabong 114 and Amboy Manlapaz's RM Firefly got 1 1/2 pots each. The other qualifiers were Jade Resort, Binangonan Balbina, Red Creek II, Jaen Col. VGB Firefly and Magic Wing Sundance.

C. Luzon vs Metro in San Juan derby

A BIG GROUP OF PROMINENT COCKERS FROM CENTRAL LUZON COLLIDES with their Metro Manila counterparts today in a P500,000 5-cock derby backed by Sagupaan Complexor 3000 at the San Juan Coliseum. The first of 82 matches begins at 4 p.m. The Central Luzon team will be led by Jun and Rudy Jingco, Jet Fernando, mayors Dennis Pineda and Carmelo Lazatin, Peping Taba, Mario Gonzales, Pete Rivera, the Madlambayan brothers, Efren Canlas, among others. Facing them are popular Metro Manila derbyists such as Patrick Antonio, Benjie Lim, Tony Lasala, Boy Royo, Pol Estrellado, Bong Villanueva, Tito Reyes, Eric dela Rosa, Renato Shio and Butchoy Olano. Entry fee is P22,000. For inquiries, call 725-5369.

'Labanan' kicks off Friday in Pasay

AT LEAST 35 REGULAR DERBYISTS HAVE CONFIRMED PARTICIPATION IN THE "Labanan sa Pasay" 5-cock derby this Friday at the Pasa City Cockpit. The one-day event supported by Sagupaan Complexor 3000 will have 100 fights and start at 2 p.m., according to PCC pit manager Eric dela Rosa. Participants are requested to submit their entries tomorrow, from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. For inquiries, call 843-1890, 843-1746 or 816-6750. The cash pot is P500,000 for an entry fee of P22,000

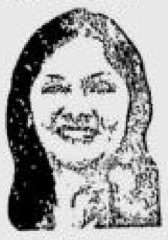
RACING

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Qrt/Tri)—Daldalera/Garbo's Fancy (3), Aya's Dream (4), Stradivanus (6), Going Strike (2)
Race 2—(Qrt/Tri)—The Strategist (7), Diamond Sky (3), Through The Fire (1), Something Silver (2)
Race 3—(Penta/Tri)—Native Prince (9), Kalgalan (3), Starry Night (1), Five O'Clock (5), Il Amorosa (10)
Race 4—(Qrt/Tri)—Western Dancer (9), Truly Impressive (1), Jaw Breaker (3), Chicklet (5)
Race 5—(Penta/Tri)—Boxster (5), Renzie's Stays (4), Modern Spirit (7), Friendly Venture (9), Inca (14)
Race 6—(Qrt/Tri)—Playing Cool (1), Mesmerize (4), West N Wild (10), Royal Rose (6)
Race 7—(Penta/Tri)—Modern Classic (2), Hurry Prince (6), Once And For All (4), Open Sky (12), Imperator (11)
Race 8—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Lakambini (8), Kawtiwali (3), Hurry Putter (10), He's So Lucky (6), Yankee Clipper (1), Brazen Truth (3)

Derick sends Phone Pals to 'Hell Week'

IN HUDDLE



Beth Celis

NEWLY APPOINTed Talk 'N Text head coach Derick Pumaren called his first 8 days with the Phone Pals "Hell Week."

Phone pals Asi Taulava and Jimmy Alapag echoed Derick's words.

"It's been a little rough, but we're surviving," said Asi, who announced that the team is now on its second week of hell. He's optimistic, though, that the new coach's backbreaking training program will yield positive results.

Derick took the Phone Pals to Subic last Monday for a mini camp.

The objective, he said, is twofold. "For rigid training and team bonding."

If the first week was hard, Asi said the second one in Subic was harder.

***

It was work, work, work the moment the team arrived in Subic. Three hours of basketball practice from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, followed by lunch and a short rest. Weights in the afternoon and/or aqua training. This, in summary, is what the Phone Pals have to contend with daily in the four-day camp.

Derick, who can actually feel the renewed energy, is happy with the way the Phone Pals have been responding to the new program.

"The team is working very, very hard," Derick said. "I've been pushing them to the limits but they were able to survive. They're showing they want to turn things around. I told them I cannot do this alone, neither can management. We all have to work together."

So far, no one is complaining.

"Everyone is taking the training positively," said Jimmy Alapag. "Everyone is cooperating. We know this is the only way to improve."

***

For the second conference, Derick said he will be putting a premium on defense.

"Offense is not a problem to this team," Derick explained. "*Noong araw nga puro* offense, until I got on board. I believe defense *ang magdadala sa* team."

If the team shows the same enthusiasm, dedication and diligence on a consistent basis, Derick said there's no reason why the training would not yield positive results.

***

How long has it been since BAP president Joey Lina and the country's basketball stakeholders got together to chart a new course for Philippine basketball? Two months? Three months?

I can't remember exactly, but yesterday, I realized that it had been all too quiet on this front. I decided to find out how far the group has gone in reconstructing the sports association.

My timing was perfect. PBA Commissioner Noli Eala said the first draft of the BAP's new constitution and bylaws was scheduled for distribution to the stakeholders yesterday for study.

"The documents will contain the objectives, principles, structures and programs of the "new" BAP, which will not be divulged to the public until the whole process is completed."

***

If there are proposed amendments, Noli said these would be discussed when the board meets on Tuesday, Feb. 28.

Noli said the group has already met four times and has covered a lot of ground.

"These are three-hour meetings, that's why we accomplish so much," he said.

Following next Tuesday's meeting, the group will immediately work on a second draft for the new BAP constitution and bylaws.

Once finalized, the documents will be presented to the Philippine Olympic Committee. Upon approval, the papers will be submitted to the Fiba.

The new BAP's constitution is patterned after Basketball USA, according to Noli.

To avoid derailment, the contents of the constitution and bylaws will be kept strictly confidential until such time that it is approved by the POC and the Fiba. So far the group is lucky there have been no leaks.

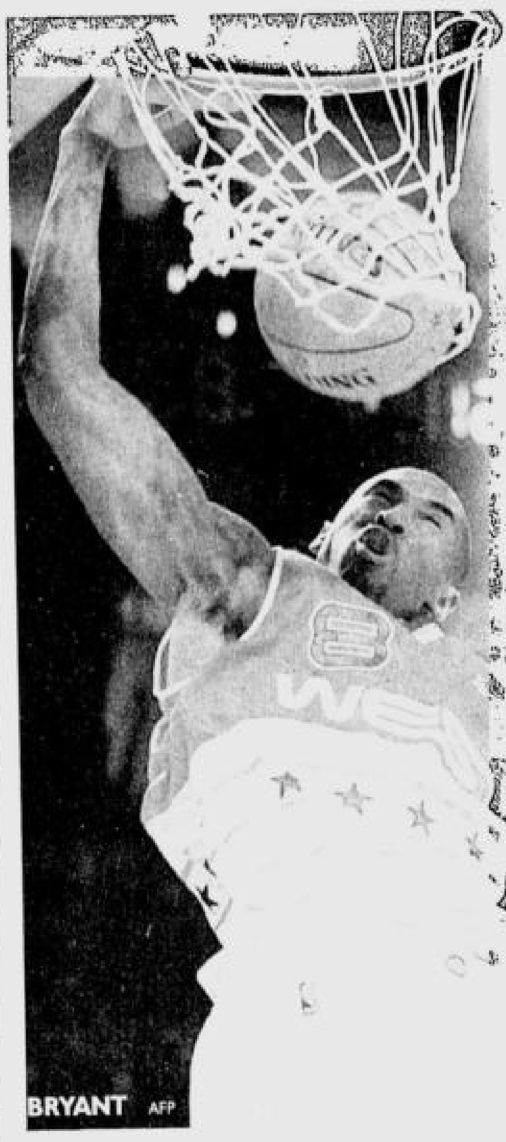
Noli said he expects to get the documents finalized by the ides of March.

***

It's not on the agenda, but with so much uproar over the result of the last Best Player of the Conference race, Noli said he expects the matter to be raised during the board meeting set for Monday, Feb. 27.

TEAM USA

Shaq-Kobe reunion looms



BRYANT AFP

HOUSTON, TEXAS—KOBE BRYANT AND SHAQ O'Neal, who have shaken hands after a public falling out when they were teammates with the Los Angeles Lakers, may become teammates again at the Fiba World Championship.

Bryant has already volunteered for national team duty in Japan this summer, but his former Lakers teammate O'Neal, now with the Miami Heat, is still thinking over an invitation.

The two were the backbone of the Lakers when they won three NBA championships.

Jerry Colangelo, the managing director of USA Basketball's men's senior national team program, was at the NBA All-Star weekend in Houston, and according to a report in the Arizona Republic, he has 28 commitments for 22 spots and is waiting on a decision from O'Neal.

"Shaq saw me in the elevator and said, 'I'll call you in a week or two,'" Colangelo said. "I said, 'Shaq, there's always a spot for you.'"

The report also said the only non-NBA players who have a chance of travelling to Japan are JJ Redick, of Duke University, Gonzaga College's Adam Morrison and Ohio State University-bound high school star Greg Oden.

The draw for the Fiba World Championship was kind to Team USA. The Americans are in Group D with Puerto Rico and Italy, which needed wild cards, and China, Senegal and Slovenia.

The United States bowed out of the 2002 Fiba World Championship in Indianapolis at the quarterfinals and two years later lost three times at the Olympics before settling for bronze.

Last year, a team which consisted largely of journeymen, professionals from leagues overseas finished fourth at the Fiba Americas Championship to qualify for the Fiba World Championship.

Bryant and O'Neal helped the LA Lakers to three NBA titles.

AFP

O'NEAL AFP

Austrian men finally get gold in Winter Olympics

TURIN, ITALY—BENJAMIN RAICH FInally gave Austria its Olympic gold medal in men's Alpine skiing at this year's Winter Games.

About an hour later, Austrian teammate Michaela Dorfmeister won her second.

Later Monday, under lights in the Italian Alps, the Austrian men's ski jumping team made it three golds for the day and seven overall—a national record.

The victories provided welcome relief for a nation whose Olympics has been overshadowed by a doping scandal swirling around its Nordic team.

Tatiana Navka and Roman Kostomarov continued Russia's dominance of the Turin figure skating rink, taking the ice dancing title on a night that featured far fewer tumbles than Sunday's fallathon in the original dance.

American pair Tanith Belbin and Benjamin Agosto were second and Elena Grushina and Ruslan Goncharov of Ukraine took the bronze.

Canada's women completed a dominating ice hockey campaign, beating shock finalist Sweden, 4-1, in the final.

Raich, the overall World Cup leader, won the men's giant slalom Monday with a two-run combined time of 2 minutes, 35.00 seconds to give the much-hyped Austrian men's team a gold medal in the next-to-last Alpine event.

Hermann Maier, who won the giant slalom at his last Olympics in 1998 at the Nagano Games, took bronze, finishing .16 behind his teammate. Joel Chenal of France got silver, .07 seconds slower than Raich.

Raich, who won the last two World Cup giant slalom races before the games, was fifth after the opening leg but won the gold with a brilliant second effort.

"This makes me extremely happy," Raich said. "The Olympic victory was my greatest goal."

Dorfmeister, who also won the opening downhill last week, crossed the finish line in 1:32.47, edging Janica Kostelic by .27 seconds. Alexandra Meissnitzer of Austria was third.

"I'm flying like an angel," Dorfmeister said.

Kostelic won her fourth Olympic gold medal Saturday in the women's combined—her first three came four years ago in Salt Lake City. She also has won two silvers—both in the super-G—to become the most decorated woman in Olympic Alpine skiing history. *AP*

TEAM Canada celebrates after the final buzzer. The Canadians whipped Sweden to once again dominate women's hockey in the Games. AFP

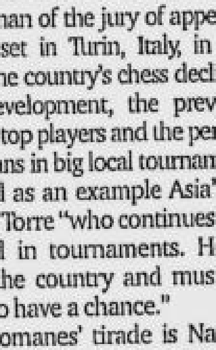
Campo bats for revival of RP chess

By Marc Anthony Reyes

FOR THE PAST 50 YEARS, FLORENCIO CAMpomanes had seen the roller-coaster ride of Philippine chess. As he turns 79 today, he wants the sport closest to his heart to spring back to life.

"RP chess should straighten up, if it wishes to be counted again as a Southeast Asian, let alone Asian chess power," said Camponanes, the World Chess Federation (Fide) president from 1982-1995 and now its lifetime honorary president.

"We are now at the bottom of the heap," said Campomanes, captain of the first RP team that saw action in the World Chess Olympiad in Moscow, citing the dismal showing of the Filipino chessers in the 23rd Southeast Asian Games where they were shut out of the gold in the competitions dominated by Vietnam.



CAMPOMANES

"We used to teach countries like China, Vietnam and India," added Campomanes at yesterday's PSA Forum at the Pantalan restaurant in Manila. "Now they have surpassed us."

In a prepared statement, Campomanes pointed out that "no serious training (of the national team) was undertaken despite a generous grant of P5 million from the First Gentleman's Foundation."

Appointed as chairman of the jury of appeals in the World Olympiad set in Turin, Italy, in May, Campomanes traced the country's chess decline to lack of grassroots development, the prevailing "chess culture" among top players and the perennial seeding of the veterans in big local tournaments.

Campomanes cited as an example Asia's first Grandmaster Eugene Torre "who continues to insist on being seeded in tournaments. He has done his service to the country and must give way so others will also have a chance."

Also hit by Campomanes' tirade is National Chess Federation of the Philippines president Go Teng Kok.

"He (Go) can't run chess the way he runs track and field," said Campomanes. "Kulot ang utak ng mga chess players (chess players' minds are complicated)."

Big City youth games start April 2

WITH AN EYE TOWARDS MASS PARticipation and a heart for charity, the fifth Manila Youth Games is all set for its April 2 to 9 hosting at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

The event is expected to draw 10,000 of the best young athletes from all over the Big City into the 14 sports competitions that will be held.

This year's theme is "MayniLA Sports, Kasali Ka!"

Arnold "Ali" Atienza, chief of the organizing Manila Sports Council (Masco), said practically all 897 barangays and 130 public and private schools in the country's capital will be represented in the week-long multi-event competition.

"We envision the 5th MY Games to be bigger and more competitive than the fourth edition," said the son of Manila Mayor Lito Atienza.

Events to be disputed are athletics, badminton, baseball, chess, dancesports, football, gymnastics, softball, swimming, table tennis, lawn tennis, taekwondo, volleyball and paralympics.

Meanwhile, Atienza revealed that about 30,000 assorted canned goods donated by participants in last year's 3rd Manila Marathon will be turned over to landslide victims in St. Bernard, Southern Leyte.

Organizers of the marathon had waived registration fees in exchange for donations of canned goods to boost Masco's food drive for the benefit, initially, of underfed children in Antique and Kalinga.

Anticipating a huge turnout for the MY Games, organizers started accepting entries as early as January. *AP*

Sorenstam tops LPGA world ranking; Rosales 24th

CARLSBAD, CALIFORNIA—ANNIKA SORENstam was officially designated as the best female golfer Tuesday, topping the debut of Women's World Golf Ranking based on her 21 victories worldwide and three major championships over the last two years.

The Swede led No. 2 Paula Creamer by nearly twice the American's point total, while Michelle Wie was third.

The 16-year-old from Hawaii, who turned pro in October, could move ahead of Creamer depending on what happens in the Fields Open in Hawaii this week on the US LPGA Tour.

Jennifer Rosales of the Philippines, who had a big stint last year, is ranked No. 24.

The women's ranking, sponsored by Rolex, will be published every Tuesday and used as criteria for getting into tournaments such as the US LPGA Championship, the Women's British Open and the HSBC Women's World Match Play.

"The Rolex Rankings make nationality, tour membership and amateur or professional status virtually invisible, providing a definitive answer to the question, 'Who are the best women golfers in the world?'" American LPGA Tour commissioner Carolyn Bivens said.

The system is similar to the men's ranking. It measures performance over two years, with emphasis placed on the most recent 13-week period. Points are assigned based on the strength of field, then divided by the number of tournaments played.

But there are two major differences.

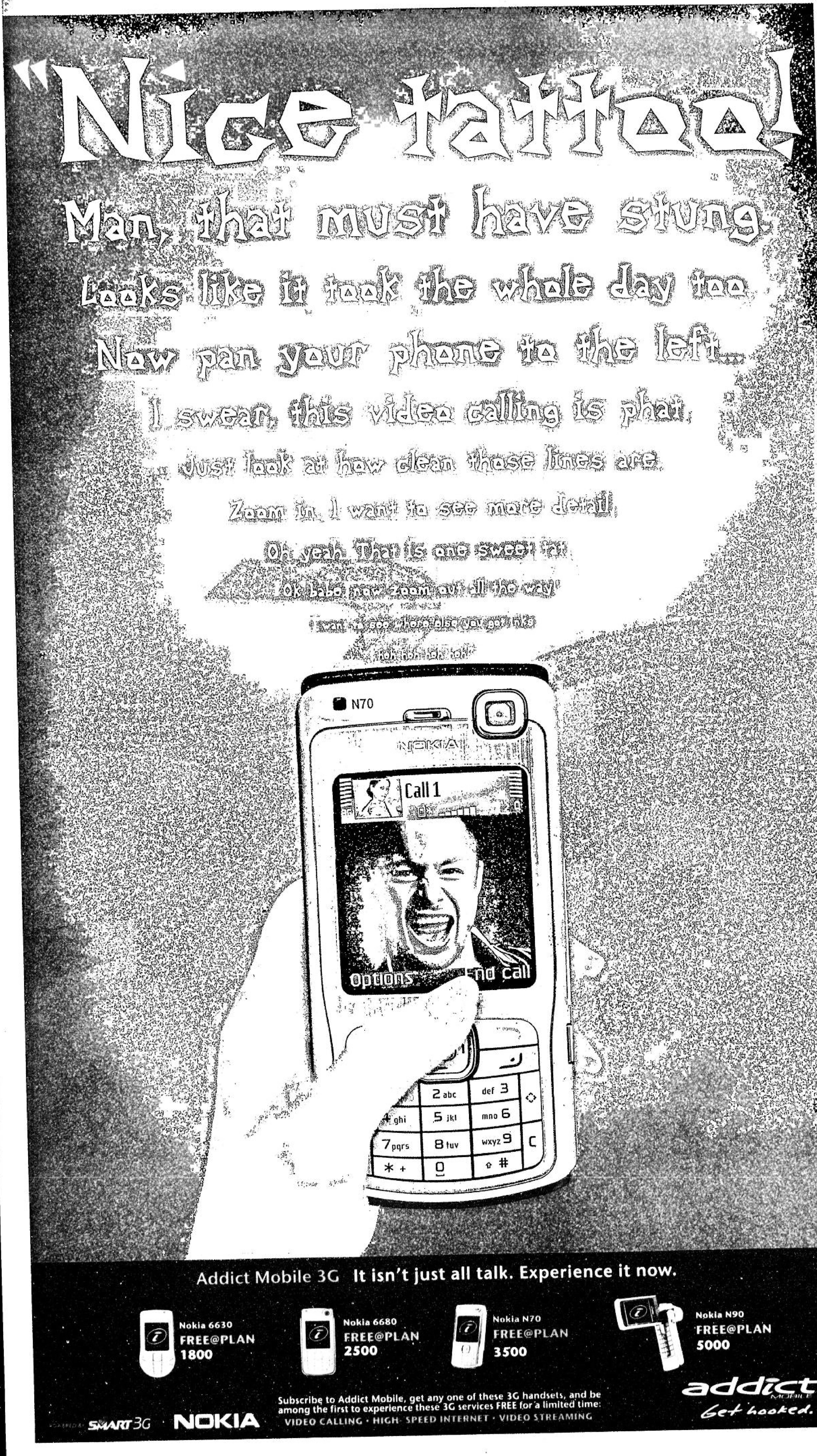
Professionals and amateurs can appear in the women's world ranking because anyone can earn points by competing in official events on the US, European, Japan, Korean and Australian women's tours, along with the developmental Futures Tour in the United States.

And while the men have a minimum divisor of 40 tournaments over two years, the women's divisor is only 15.

That explains why Wie, who plays sparingly while attending school in Honolulu, started out ranked so high.

She has played 15 events on the US tour since 2004 with six top-10 finishes—three in majors. *AP*

ROSALES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JAKE GYLLENHAAL

ANG LEE

Bafta's best

LONDON—"BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN" TOOK FOUR AWARDS including Best Picture at Sunday's British Academy Film Awards, boosting its hopes for the Oscars on March 5.

Ang Lee was named Best Director and Jake Gyllenhaal won Best Supporting Actor. Larry McMurtry and Diana Ossana, who adapted Annie Proulx's short story, won for Best Adapted Screenplay.

The film beat a strong shortlist that included "Capote," "Crash," "Good Night, and Good Luck" and British favorite "The Constant Gardener." *AP*

Love revisited

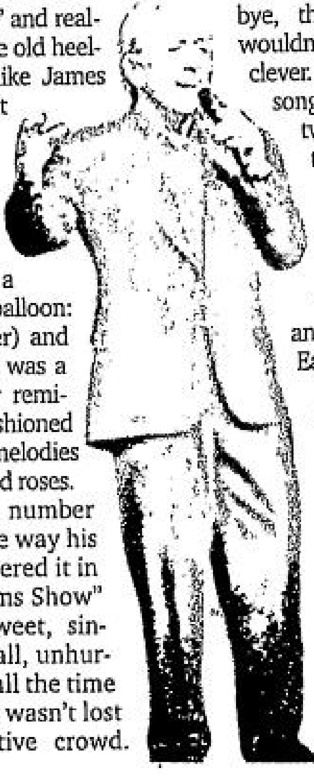
Andy Williams takes back Pinoy fans to days of wine and roses

REVIEW

WHERE DO I BEGIN?

Andy Williams filled the Big Dome on Valentine's Day with very special things, indeed—angel songs and wild imaginings, not the least of which was feeling love all over again as the many-splendored thing that it was and always will be.

That's over 20 songs, including a medley of three of his most endearing hits, the themes from blockbuster movies "Love Story" and "The Godfather" topped with "Can't Help Falling In Love (With You)," from "Blue Hawaii." The venerable Mr. Williams breezed through the challenging repertoire, swaying ever so gently in some numbers, like "Our Love is Here to Stay," and really giving the floor the old heel-and-toe in others, like James Taylor's "How Sweet It Is."



Singing along almost the whole time, a great part of the audience might as well have sported a collective thought balloon: "We're 50 (and over) and proud of it!" Yes, it was a perfect evening for reminiscing on old-fashioned lyrics, sweeping melodies and days of wine and roses.

Every single number was performed the way his audience remembered it in "The Andy Williams Show" of the 1960s—sweet, sincere and, best of all, unhurried. Like he had all the time in the world. This wasn't lost on the appreciative crowd. After all, it *was* a date concert.

One of the evening's best renditions was "God Only Knows," a Beach Boys original. "I don't sing it like they do," the singer quipped, and the audience cracked up as they did with his every joke.

Williams also took on Smokey Robinson, Barry Manilow, the Bee Gees, and his late dear friend, John Denver.

But the show stoppers that each ended in a standing ovation (by the way, Araneta was packed) were sentimental favorites "McArthur's Park," "Impossible Dream," "I Left My Heart in San Francisco" and—all together now—"Moon River!"

When Williams said goodbye, the blissed-out crowd wouldn't let go. But he was clever. He had exited two songs early, and sang those two songs remaining on the sequence guide (opps, we got a copy) as encores—fittingly, "My Funny Valentine" and his former TV show's goodnight-and-goodbye piece, "May Each Day."

From the bleachers came an impassioned plea: "Dear Heart!"

Well, we didn't *hear* that one, but the singer made sure we got it some other way: "Soon I'll kiss you hello..."

You'll be back, won't you, Mr. Williams? *Emmie G. Velarde*

OPENING TODAY

Mga Batang Lansangan

Stars Camille Prats, Juan Rodrigo, Melissa Mendez

Directed by Angelito de Guzman

A remake of a 1970s tearjerker starring Vilma Santos and megged by Armando de Guzman, whose son takes over the director's chair. Angelito promises "a new twist" to this familiar tale of street children.

Syriana

Stars George Clooney, Matt Damon, Chris Cooper, William Hurt

Directed by Stephen Gaghan

A political thriller set in the world of the oil industry. Roger Ebert of the Chicago Sun-Times raves: "... endlessly fascinating."

Memoirs of a Geisha

Stars Ziyi Zhang, Michelle Yeoh, Gong Li, Ken Watanabe

OPENING/ A2-2

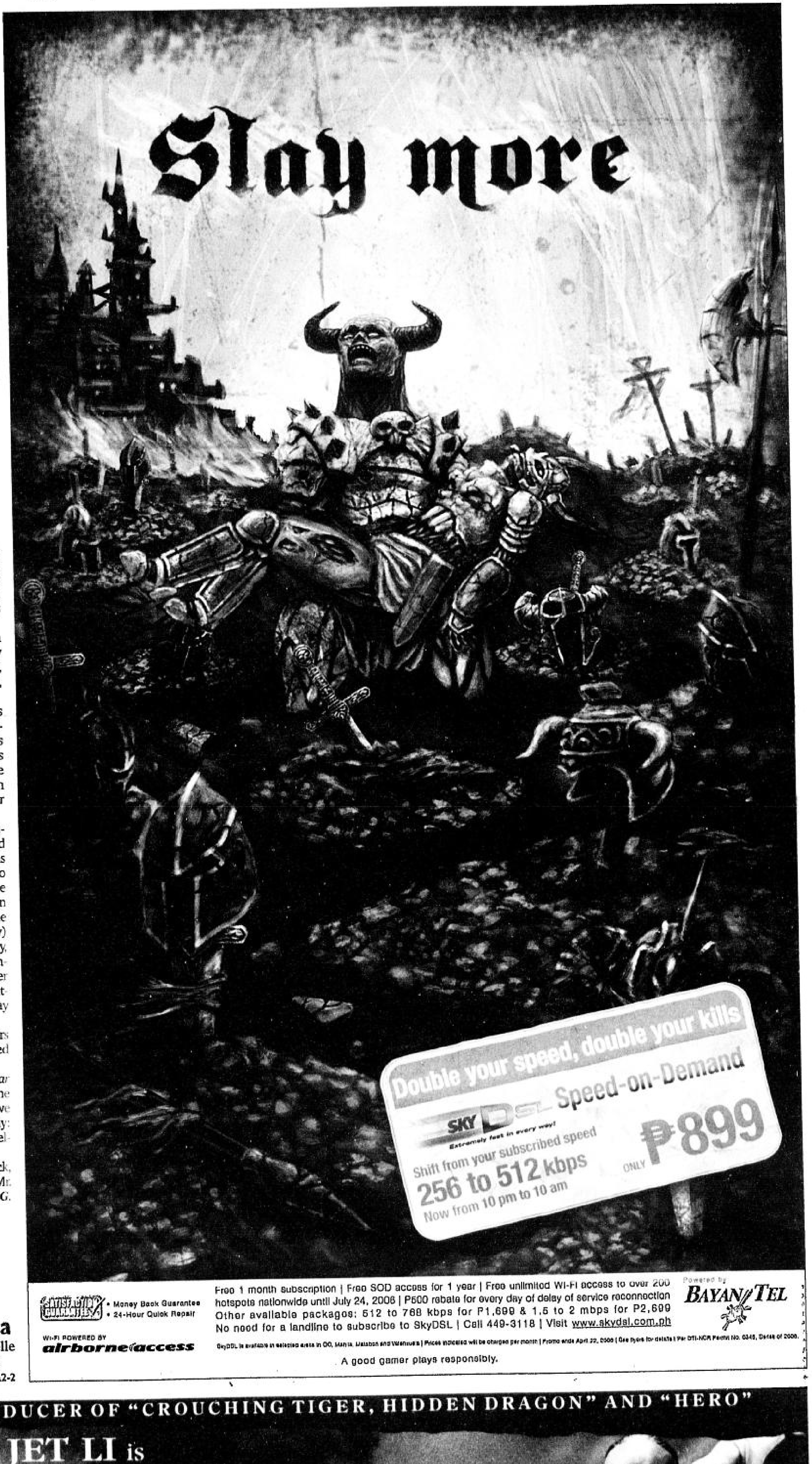
Warring industry leaders meet

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

WARRING INDUSTRY LEADERS CAME FACE to face on Monday to discuss with President Macapagal-Arroyo the ills and controversies plaguing local movies—VAT for theaters, amusement taxes, piracy and the redistribution of the Metro Manila Film Festival proceeds.

The two-hour meeting in Malacañang was "very fruitful," said Ric Camaligan, vice chair of the Motion Picture Anti-Film Piracy Council Inc. and president of the National Cinema Association of the Philippines, with Ms Arroyo promising to help.

WARRING/ A2-5



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OPENING TODAY

From page A2-1

Directed by Rob Marshall

A visit to the enigmatic world of geishas—Japanese women "trained to please, flatter and pour tea." Jami Bernard of the New York Daily News thinks the female leads "put on an Oscar-worthy catfight."

Mukesh Bhatt's Murder

Stars Mallika Sherawat, Emraan Hashmi, Ashmit Patel

Directed by Anurag Basu

From Bollywood, a supposed re-

OPENING/ A2-4

The most romantic film this Valentine Season.

John Lloyd Cruz and Bea Alonzo
introducing *Sam Milby*

Close to you

DIRECTED BY
CATHY GARCIA-MOLINA

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MOVIE GUIDE
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1	(DOLBY)	BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE	GP
2	(DOLBY)	MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA	PG13
3	(DOLBY)	SYRIANA	R13
4	(DOLBY)	FINAL DESTINATION	R13

PREMIERE

	(DOLBY)	PINK PANTHER	GP

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1	(DDS)	AEON FLUX
2	(SDDS)	SYRIANA
3	(DTS)	PINK PANTHER
4	GOLD (DTS)	BIG MOMMAS HOUSE-2
5	GOLD (DOLBY)	FINAL DESTINATION-3
6	GOLD (SDDS)	MEMOIRS OF A GESIHA
7	GOLD (DOLBY)	BROKE BACK MOUNTAIN
8	(DOLBY/STEREO)	MGA BATANG BANGKETA
9	(DOLBY/STEREO)	CLOSE TO YOU
10	(DOLBY/STEREO)	I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU

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1	(DOLBY)	BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE 2
2	(DOLBY)	MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
3	(DOLBY)	SYRIANA
4	(DOLBY)	FINAL DESTINATION 3

CINEMA 2000
Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216

1	BIG MOMMAS HOUSE-2
2	MEMOIRS OF A GESIHA
3	FINAL DESTINATION-3
4	CLOSE TO YOU

starmall EDSA-SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150

3		MEMOIRS OF A GESIHA
4	(DOLBY DIGITAL EX)	CLOSE TO YOU
5		AEON FLUX

metropolis star cinema
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 5433994

1	I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
2	MEMOIRS OF A GESIHA
3	CLOSE TO YOU
4	AEON FLUX

THEATRES
NE Pacific Mall Cabanatuan.
Telephone No. (044) 600-3025

1	UNDERWORLD-2
2	CLOSE TO YOU
3	I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-6271

★	UNDERWORLD-2
★	CLOSE TO YOU
★	RESERVED
★	RESERVED

Blue Wave MARQUINTON
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927

1	(DOLBY)	MEMOIRS OF A GESIHA
2	(DOLBY)	BIG MOMMAS HOUSE-2
3	(DOLBY)	CLOSE TO YOU
4	(DOLBY)	RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
tel 7334228

1	(DOLBY)	FINAL DESTINATION-3
2		MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
3		CLOSE TO YOU
4		SYRIANA
5		AEON FLUX

Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	CLOSE TO YOU
2	PLEASE CALL
3	PLEASE CALL
4	PLEASE CALL

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1	MGA BATANG BANGKETA
2	AEON FLUX
3	CLOSE TO YOU

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue
(Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)

1	MEMOIRS OF A GESIHA
2	CLOSE TO YOU

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1	(DOLBY EX)	MEMOIRS OF GEISHA
2		NEW WORLD
3	(DTS EX)	CLOSE TO YOU
4		THE MAID

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121

1		RESERVED
2		RESERVED
3	(DOLBY)	RESERVED
4	(DTS)	RESERVED

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489

1		I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
2		CLOSE TO YOU
3	(DOLBY)	UNDERWORLD
4	(DTS)	PLEASE CALL

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	CLOSE TO YOU
2	UNDERWORLD

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1		I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
2	(DTS)	CLOSE TO YOU
3	(DOLBY)	BLOODRAYNE
4		NEW WORLD

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Binan) tel. (049) 4111146

1		I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
2	(DOLBY)	NEW WORLD
3	(DTS)	BLOODRAYNE
4		CLOSE TO YOU

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1		I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
2		CLOSE TO YOU
3	(DOLBY)	UNDERWORLD-2

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1		I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
2		CLOSE TO YOU
3	(DOLBY)	FIRE WALL
4	(DTS)	FUN W/ DICK & JANE

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320

1		RUMOR HAS IT / FIRE WALL
2		CLOSE TO YOU
3	(DOLBY)	I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan)

1	I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
2	CLOSE TO YOU

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748

1	PLEASE CALL
2	PLEASE CALL

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1	(SDDS)	PLEASE CALL
2		PLEASE CALL
3		PLEASE CALL
4	(DTS)	PLEASE CALL

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1	(DOLBY)	NEW WORLD
2		BLOODRAYNE
3	(DTS)	CLOSE TO YOU
4		I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
5		PLEASE CALL

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	UNDERWORLD-2
2	CLOSE TO YOU
3	CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN-2
4	GOAL

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	PLEASE CALL
2	PLEASE CALL

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GALLERIA
632-9116

1 THE BRIDGE OF SAN LUIS REY • THX
2 MURDER
3 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
4 SYRIANA
5 FINAL DESTINATION 3
6 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
7 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
8 CLOSE TO YOU
9 AEON FLUX
10 PINK PANTHER

ERMITA
538-7809 to 12

1 MURDER
2 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
3 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
4 CLOSE TO YOU
5 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
6 FINAL DESTINATION 3
7 SYRIANA

METRO EAST
682-8193 • 682-8199

1 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
2 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
3 SYRIANA
4 PINK PANTHER
5 MGA BATANG BANGKETA
6 FINAL DESTINATION 3
7 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
8 CLOSE TO YOU

NOVALICHES
935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
2 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
3 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
4 CLOSE TO YOU
5 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
6 MURDER
7 MGA BATANG BANGKETA

CITISQUARE MALABON
288-2575

1 MGA BATANG BANGKETA
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER
687-5378

1 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
2 SYRIANA
3 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
4 FINAL DESTINATION 3

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SCREENING

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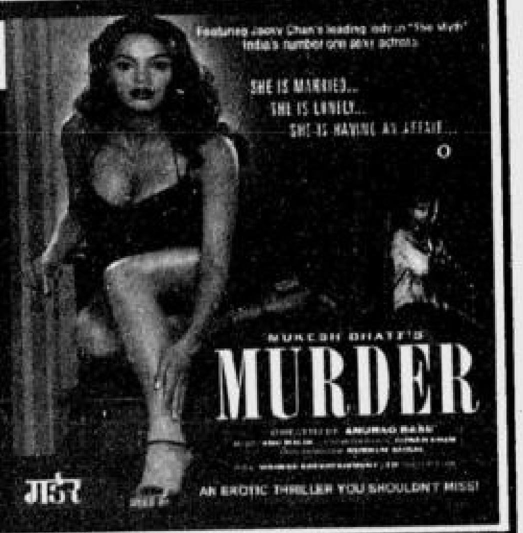
GALLERIA • ERMITA • NOVALICHES

Sudhir and Simran are a happy couple settled in Bangkok. Engineer and chasing his dreams Sudhir ignores his wife. In an alien land and novel atmosphere Simran gets longs to pursue new horizons. At this juncture she meets an old buddy Sunny. Their loneliness brings them together and ignites a passion blinded by desire. Subsequently they cross all boundaries. Soon they get obsessed and addicted to each other and Simran's adulterous affair begins to show off. Infuriated by the deteriorating state of his marriage, Sudhir confronts Sunny. And this very meeting leads to devastating results for them all.

starting
FEBRUARY 22

MTRCB Rating: R-18

For **SCREENING SCHEDULES** pls. call our **CINEMA ACCESS**: 635-5555 or visit us at www.robinsonsmovieworld.com


Featuring Jacky Chan's leading lady in "The Myth" India's number one sexy actress
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SHE IS LONELY...
SHE IS HAVING AN AFFAIR...
MUKESH BHATT'S
MURDER
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STA. ROSA
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1 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 BLOODRAYNE 2
4 GOAL
5 NEW WORLD

LIPA
(043) 757-3664
(043) 312-5870

1 UNDERWORLD 2
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 MUNICH
4 GOAL
5 FIREWALL

DASMARIÑAS
(046) 852-2125
(046) 416-4332

1 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 WALK THE LINE
4 GOAL
5 NEW WORLD

ANGELES
(045) 892-2348

1 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 GOAL
4 NEW WORLD

IMUS
(046) 875-3838
(046) 471-8189

1 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
2 NEW WORLD
3 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
4 MGA BATANG BANGKETA
5 CLOSE TO YOU
6 PINK PANTHER

STARMILLS
(045) 875-1927
(045) 961-5270

1 BLOODRAYNE
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
4 GOAL
5 LITTLE MANHATTAN
6 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA

BACOLOD
(034) 441-0453
(034) 441-0459

1 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 PINK PANTHER
4 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
5 UNDERWORLD 2
6 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN

ILOILO
(033) 336-8070

1 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 PINK PANTHER
4 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
5 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
6 MUNICH

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GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	AYALA CENTER CEBU
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February 13 to 28, 2006

Greenbelt's Onstage

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THX

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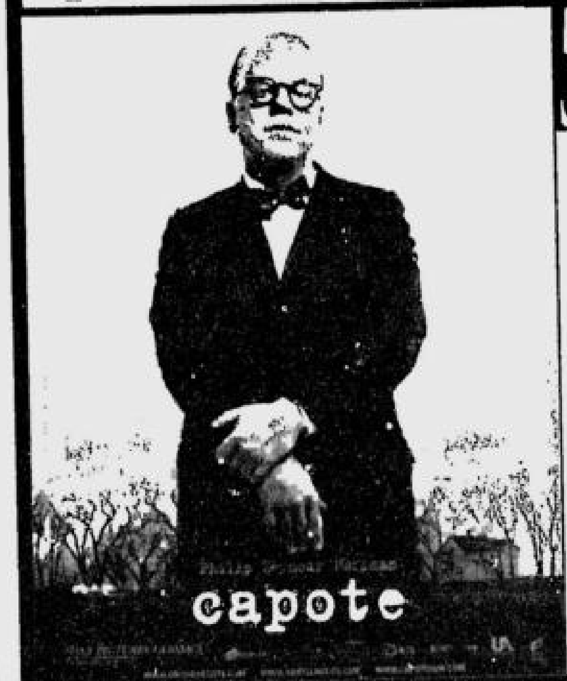
G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 CLOSE TO YOU	2 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE 2	3 FINAL DESTINATION 3	4 MGA BATANG BANGKETA
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 SYRIANA	2 FINAL DESTINATION 3	3 THX MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 PINK PANTHER	5 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN	6 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE 2	7 GOAL
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 AEON FLUX	2 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX SYRIANA GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 MUNICH GUARANTEED SEATS	4 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN GUARANTEED SEATS	5 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA	2 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE 2		
	3 SYRIANA	4 PINK PANTHER	5 FINAL DESTINATION 3	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA	2 RUMOR HAS IT	3 AEON FLUX	4 CLOSE TO YOU

opens march 1 exclusively at ayala cinemas



5 ACADEMY AWARD NOMINATIONS
BEST PICTURE
BEST ACTOR PHILIP SEYMOUR HOFFMAN
BEST DIRECTOR BENNETT MILLER

capote

"Philip Seymour Hoffman's unmissable & unforgettable performance as Truman Capote makes him the front runner for every Best Actor prize in the book. Great acting is quicksilver, impossible to pin down in words. But you know it when you see it. And you see it with dazzling clarity in this landmark portrayal. 'CAPOTE' is a movie that doesn't pull its punches It's a KNOCKOUT!"
- Peter Travers, ROLLING STONE

"Two thumbs way up."
-EBERT & ROEPER

"A clear, steady gaze graces the smart biopic "Capote," which takes a mordant look at Truman Capote at the time he was writing "In Cold Blood." It's an etched in acid portrait of a writer whose talent was as ruthless as it was brilliant.
- David Ansen, NEWSWEEK

Customer Service text hotline:	0917 6095900
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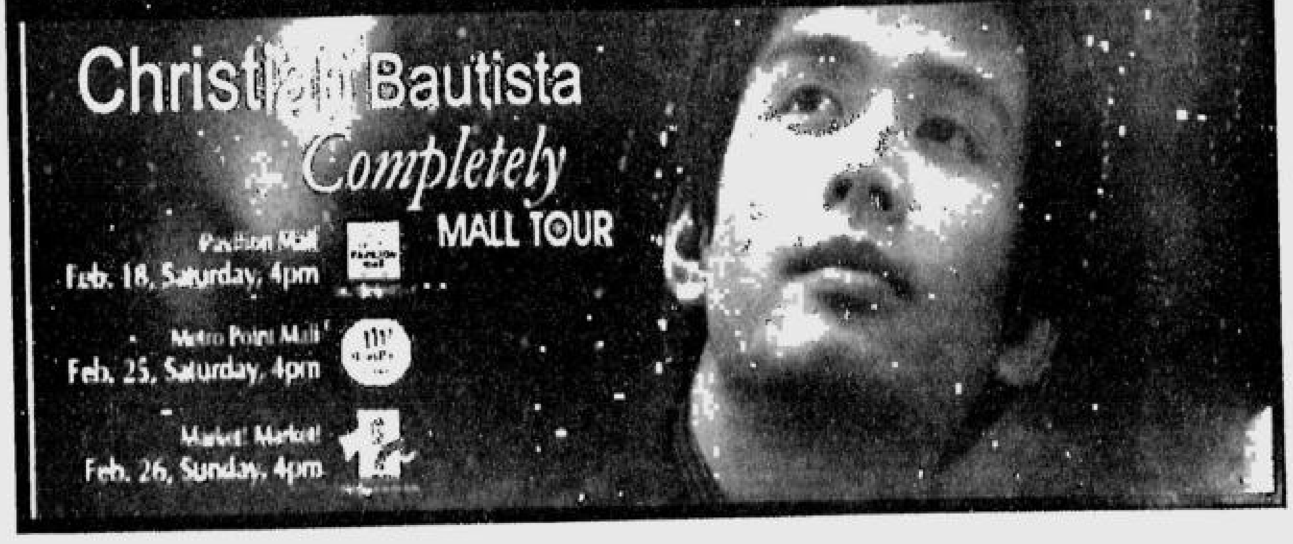
① CLOSE TO YOU
② GOAL
③ AEON FLUX
④ PINK PANTHER
⑤ BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN

EVENTS! EVENTS!



Pavilion Mall
Feb. 18, Saturday, 4pm

Metro Point Mall
Feb. 25, Saturday, 4pm

Market! Market!
Feb. 26, Sunday, 4pm

OPENING TODAY

From page A2-2

make of Adrian Lyne's "Unfaithful," starring Richard Gere and Diane Lane. IndiaFM News Bureau theorizes: "Bollywood is going through a revolution ... [with] offbeat themes [and] uninhibited body display."

Final Destination 3

Stars Ryan Merriman, Mary Elizabeth Winstead, Gina Holden

Directed by James Wong

The third of the franchise on teeners hounded by the Grim Reaper. Michael Wilmington of the Chicago Tribune says it "should either slake your worst appetites or drive you to the exits."

Big Momma's House 2

Stars Martin Lawrence, Nia Long, Zachary Levi, Emily Procter

Directed by John P. Whitesell

Manic comic Lawrence is back as master-of-disguise FBI man Malcolm Turner. Kyle Smith of the New York Post says "open-heart surgery" is more amusing.

SM CINEMA
movietime
SM DIAL-A-MOVIE 833-9999*
CENTER Stage
LIVE-LARGE
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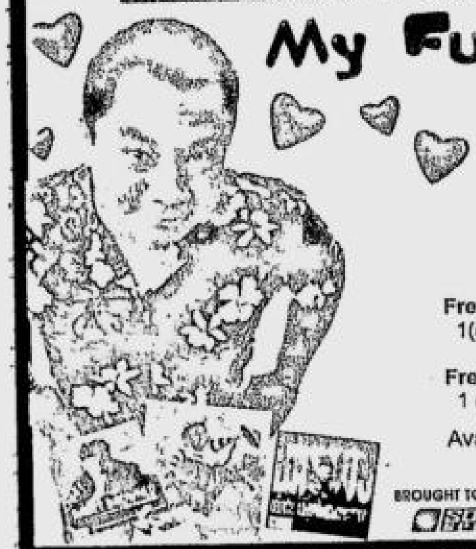

CENTER Stage
PEPSI
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fly wear

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February 24, 2006, 8:00 PM

SM Southmall Cinema 3
February 25, 2006, 8:00 PM

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THE PODIUM 633-8976
1 MEMORIES OF GEISHA
12:00FS / 12:20 MF / 03:10 / 06:00
08:20 LFS / 09:00 LMF / 11:20 END
2 SYRIANA
12:30FS / 12:50 MF / 03:30 / 06:10
08:20 LFS / 09:00 LMF / 11:00 END

MEGAMALL
1 MEMORIES OF GEISHA
10:15 FS / 10:40 MF / 01:30 / 04:20 / 07:10
09:30 LFS / 10:00 LMF / 12:20 END

CEBU (032) 231-3876
1 FIREWALL
12:00FS / 12:18 MF / 02:36 / 04:54 / 07:12
09:05 LFS / 09:30 LMF / 11:25 END
2 MEMORIES OF GEISHA
11:20FS / 11:30 MF / 02:00 / 04:30 / 07:00
09:22 LFS / 09:30 LMF / 11:50 END
3 AEON FLUX
11:20FS / 11:30 MF / 01:30 / 03:30 / 05:30
07:30 / 09:05 LFS / 09:30 LMF / 11:05 END

SM CINEMA ADMIT ONE
movietime

METRO MANILA

SM MEGAMALL
1 MEMORIES OF GEISHA
2 PINK PANTHER
3 FINAL DESTINATION 3
4 RESERVED
5 FIREWALL
6 SYRIANA
7 MGA BATANG BANGKETA
8 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
9 FUN WITH DICK AND JANE
10 AEON FLUX
11 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
12 CLOSE TO YOU

SM CITY STA. MESA
1 MEMORIES OF GEISHA
2 SYRIANA
3 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
4 FINAL DESTINATION 3
5 CLOSE TO YOU
6 PINK PANTHER
7 AEON FLUX
8 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
9 FIREWALL
10 MGA BATANG BANGKETA

SM CITY BICUTAN
1 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
2 MEMORIES OF GEISHA
3 CLOSE TO YOU
4 FINAL DESTINATION 3

SM SUPERCENTER VALENZUELA
1 PINK PANTHER
2 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
3 CLOSE TO YOU
4 MEMORIES OF GEISHA

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
1 NEW WORLD
2 SAW 2
3 PINK PANTHER
4 AEON FLUX
5 CLOSE TO YOU
6 FINAL DESTINATION 3
7 MEMORIES OF GEISHA
8 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
9 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
10 FIREWALL
11 MGA BATANG BANGKETA
12 SYRIANA

SM CITY SOUTHMALL
1 MEMORIES OF GEISHA
2 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
3 FINAL DESTINATION 3
4 CLOSE TO YOU
5 AEON FLUX
6 SYRIANA
7 MGA BATANG BANGKETA
8 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
9 PINK PANTHER
10 RESERVED

SM SUPERCENTER SUCAT
1 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
2 MEMORIES OF GEISHA
3 CLOSE TO YOU
4 FINAL DESTINATION 3

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
1 MEMORIES OF GEISHA
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 FINAL DESTINATION 3
4 RESERVED
5 MGA BATANG BANGKETA
6 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
7 SYRIANA
8 AEON FLUX

SM CITY MANILA
1 FINAL DESTINATION 3
2 MEMORIES OF GEISHA
3 SAW 2
4 AEON FLUX
5 PINK PANTHER
6 AEON FLUX
7 MGA BATANG BANGKETA
8 SYRIANA
9 CLOSE TO YOU
10 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
11 FIREWALL
12 NEW WORLD

SM CITY SAN LAZARO
1 FINAL DESTINATION 3
2 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
3 MEMORIES OF GEISHA
4 SYRIANA
5 MGA BATANG BANGKETA
6 CLOSE TO YOU

LUZON

SM CITY PAMPANGA
1 BLOODFIST
2 MEMORIES OF GEISHA
3 BLOODRAYNE
4 PINK PANTHER
5 NEW WORLD
6 CLOSE TO YOU

SM CITY BAGUIO
1 BLOODRAYNE
2 MEMORIES OF GEISHA
3 THE MAID
4 CLOSE TO YOU

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO
1 AEON FLUX
2 PINK PANTHER
3 MGA BATANG BANGKETA
4 CLOSE TO YOU

SM CITY BACOOR
1 MGA BATANG BANGKETA
2 PINK PANTHER
3 FINAL DESTINATION 3
4 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
5 AEON FLUX
6 CLOSE TO YOU
7 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
8 MEMORIES OF GEISHA

SM CITY STA. ROSA
1 GOAL
2 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
3 CLOSE TO YOU
4 BLOODRAYNE

SM CITY MARILAO
1 NEW WORLD
2 MEMORIES OF GEISHA
3 FIREWALL
4 CLOSE TO YOU

SM CITY DASMARINAS
1 NEW WORLD
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
4 MEMORIES OF GEISHA

SM CITY LUCENA
1 UNDERWORLD 2
2 WALK THE LINE
3 THE MAID
4 CLOSE TO YOU

SM CITY BATANGAS
1 FIREWALL
2 NEW WORLD
3 BLOODFIST
4 CLOSE TO YOU

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

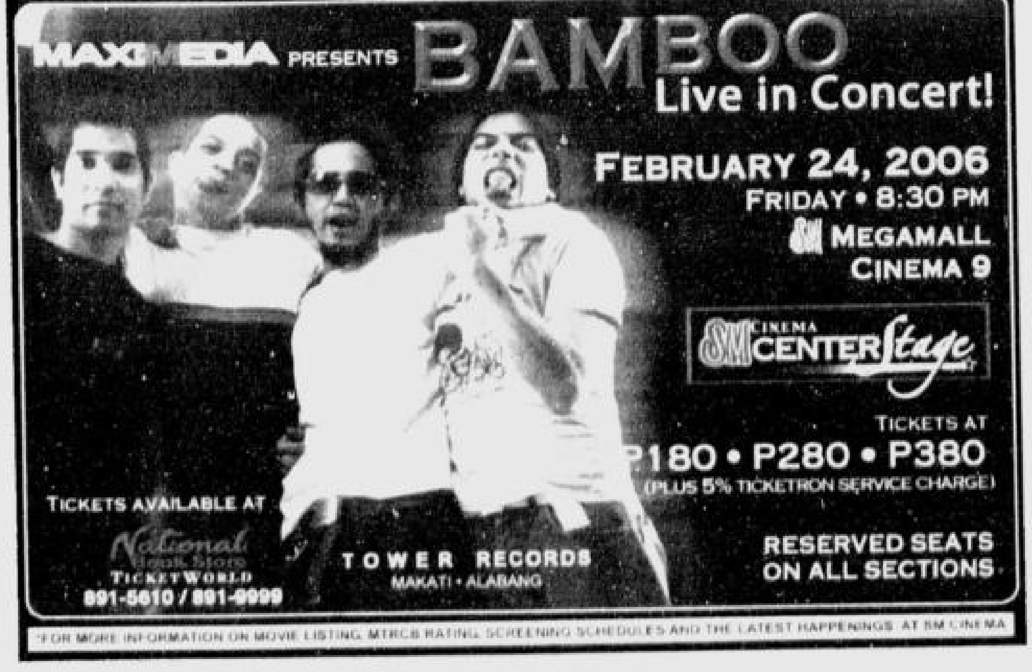
SM CITY CEBU
1 FIREWALL
2 MEMORIES OF GEISHA
3 AEON FLUX
4 PROOF
5 ST. ANGE
6 BLOODRAYNE
7 CLOSE TO YOU
8 PINK PANTHER

SM CITY ILOILO
1 BLOODRAYNE
2 RESERVED
3 UNDERWORLD 2
4 MUNICH
5 CLOSE TO YOU
6 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
7 RESERVED
8 MEMORIES OF GEISHA

SM CITY DAVAO
1 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
2 BLOODRAYNE
3 PINK PANTHER
4 CLOSE TO YOU
5 MUNICH
6 MEMORIES OF GEISHA

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
1 UNDERWORLD 2
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 MEMORIES OF GEISHA
4 SAW 2

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE



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Warring industry leaders meet

From page A2-1

In a phone interview with INQUIRER Entertainment, Camaligan reported, "The President said she [meant to review] the laws that created the Film Academy of the Philippines and MMFF. She asked [her adviser for political affairs] Gabby Claudio to give her all relevant information immediately."

Claudio would be the group's "point man," according to Ms Arroyo.

Present were the three protagonists in the heated argument over the MMFF funds: Leo Martinez, FAP director general; Vicente del Rosario, presidential consultant for the entertainment industry; and Edu Manzano, Optical Media Board chair.

Tension eased

Also present were Sen. Ramon Revilla Jr. and brother Marlon Bautista; Regal producer Lily Monteverde; Dominic Du of the Anti-Film Piracy Council, and Camaligan.

"[The meeting] went well for the FAP," Martinez said.

Camaligan said he felt the "free-wheeling dialogue with the President eased the tension in the industry."

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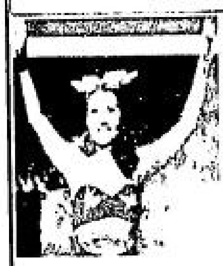

6:30p.m.
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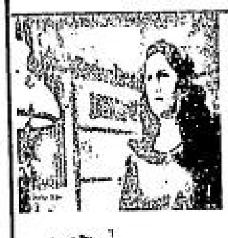

6p.m.
Gumising Ka,
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9p.m.
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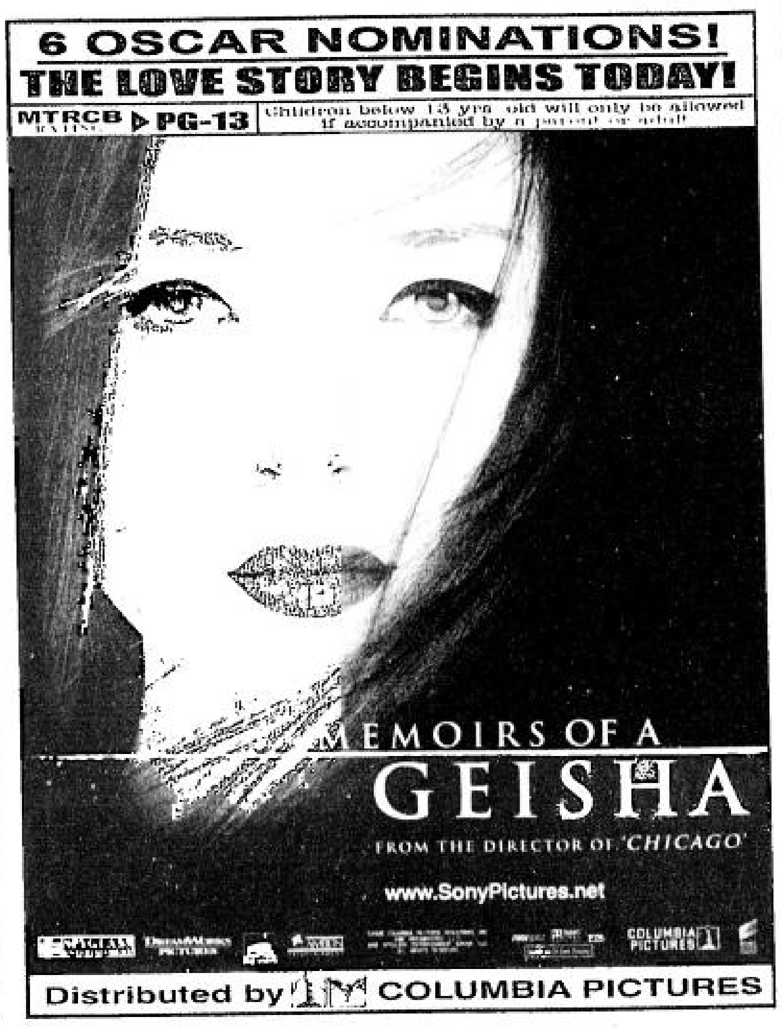
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4 FINAL DESTINATION 3
SUBJECT TO MTRCB RATING

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② MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
MTRCB PG 13
③ SYRIANA
MTRCB R-13
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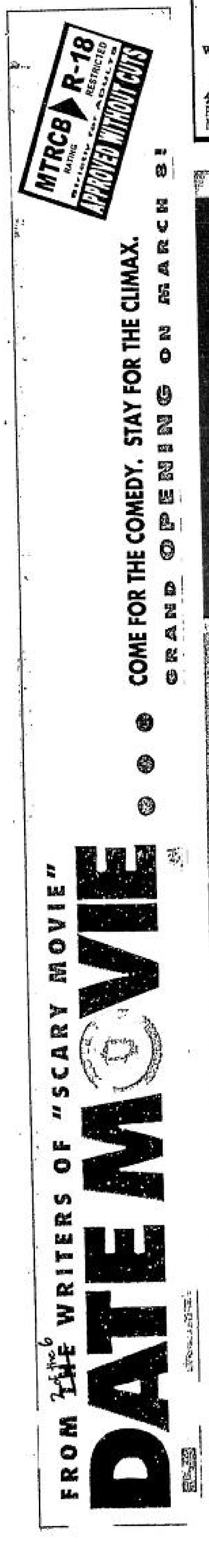
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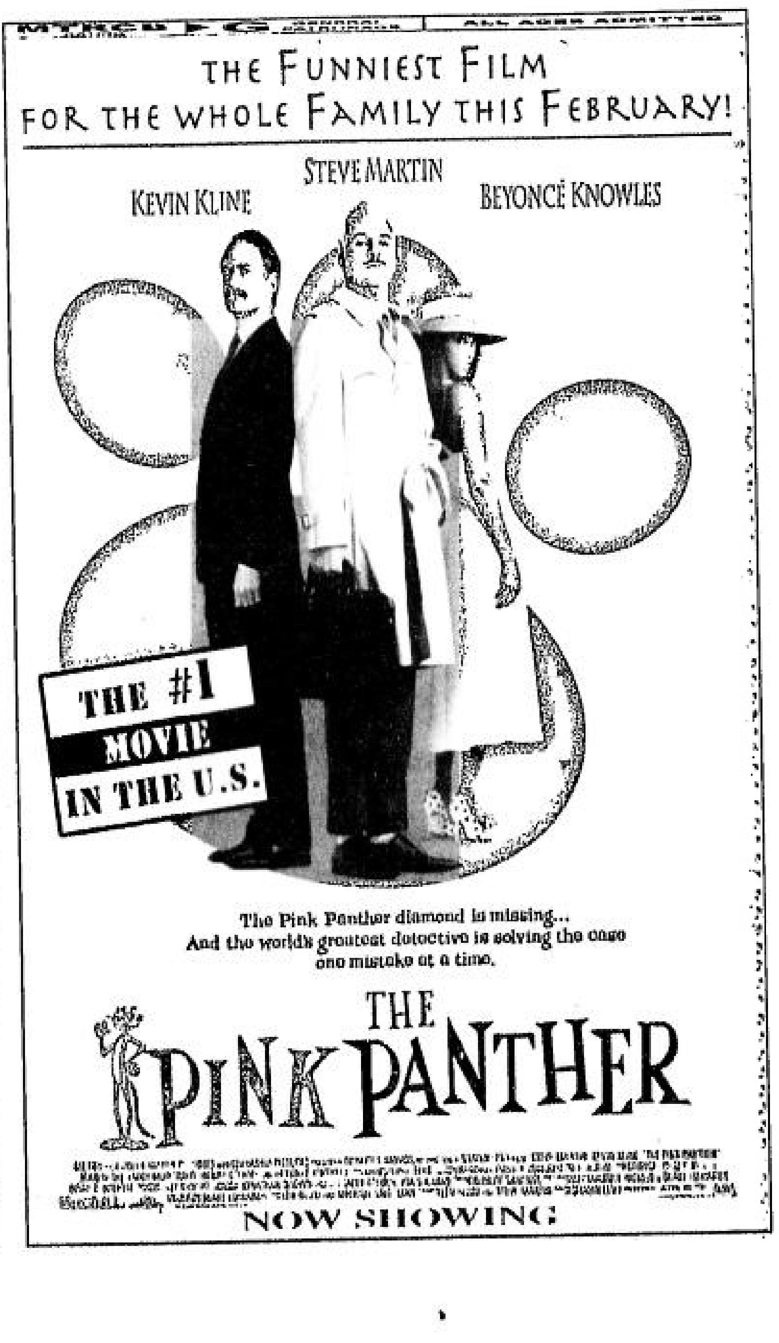
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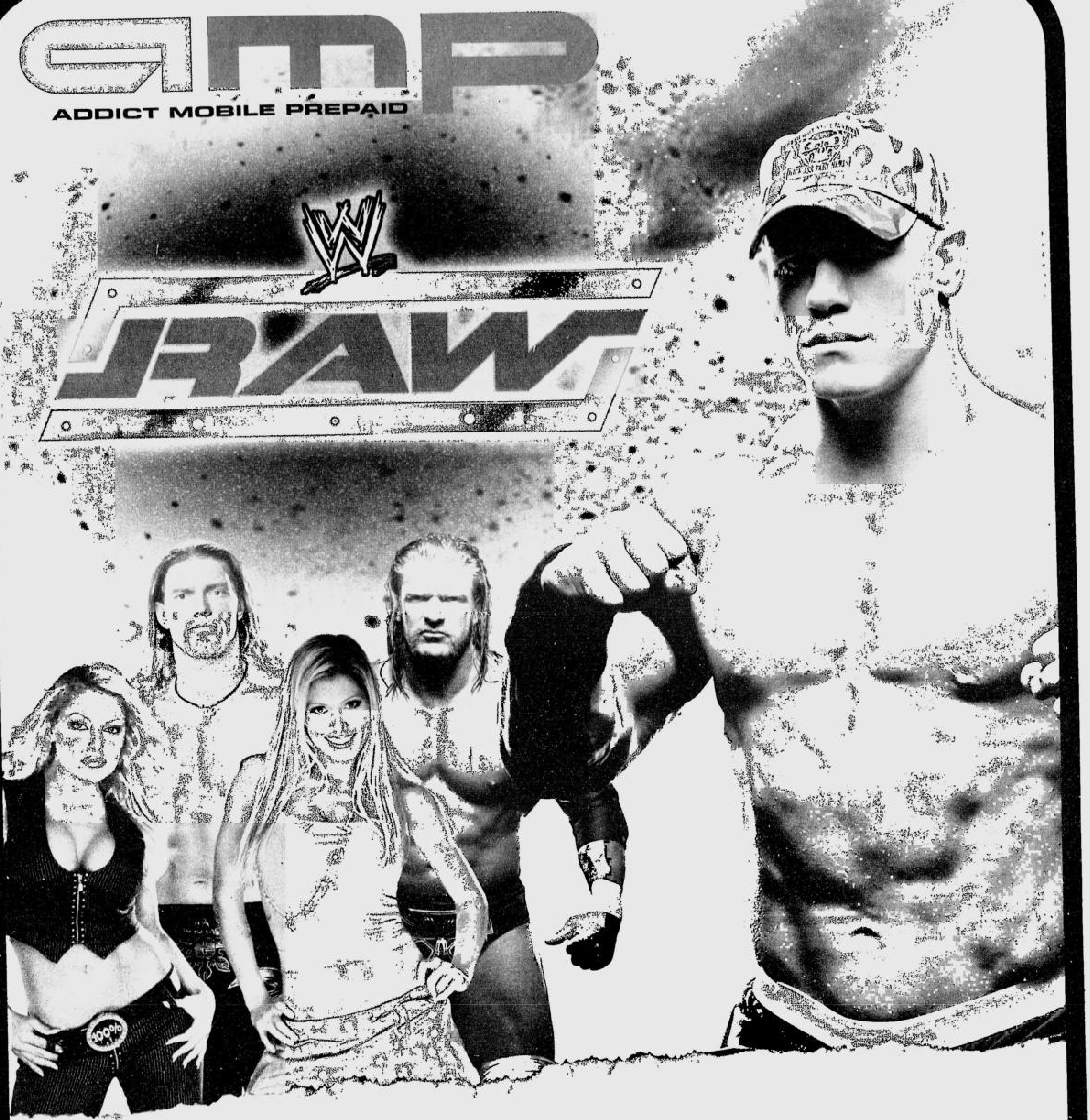

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WHAT'S INSIDE

Tessie strikes back /B3
Gov't caps bids for 20-year bonds /B12

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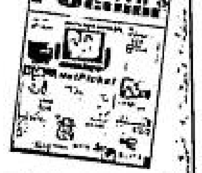

Peso slips past 52 to a dollar

On coup rumors, interest rate hike prospects

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO SLID TO THE 52:$1 LEVEL YESTERDAY ON FRESH POlitical jitters triggered by Monday's blast in Malacañang as well as escalating coup rumors ahead of the 20th People Power anniversary.

But the local currency pulled back to the 51:$1 territory following market talk that the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas sold dollars at the spot foreign exchange market to cushion the peso's fall.

The peso opened at 52.05 as traders found profit-taking opportunities but bounced back to 51.815 before closing at 51.83 against the US dollar or even stronger than Monday's finish of 51.98:$1. Total volume traded was $605 million.

"We believe the BSP was selling dollars to blunt peso weakness," said ING Bank analyst Tim Condon in a commentary yesterday.

"Investors are conditioned to see politics-induced pricing weakness as a buying opportunity and our base case is that this time will prove no different. Still, this is shaping up as an exciting week," Condon said.

He noted the Philippine police was still on red alert after the Malacañang explosion.

"Political noise has gone up ahead of the 20th anniversary of People Power I on Feb. 25," Condon noted.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr., however, insisted the foreign exchange rate remained market-driven. "There is good two-way flow in the forex market and there is no need for intervention."

"The peso continued to be affected by local developments. The improvement in the domestic currency today arose from portfolio inflows and OFW (overseas Filipino workers) remittances while corporate demand was relatively weak," the BSP chief explained.

RCBC economist Emma Pante said the dollar was recovering against the peso due to the Malacañang explosion as well as expectations that the US Federal Reserve would further raise interest rates to 5 percent.

"Commercial demand is seen to come in

PESO/ B5

DELA PAZ

ROMUALDEZ

SSS chief named chair of EPCIB

By Doris C. Dumlao

SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM president Corazon dela Paz was yesterday elected chair of Equitable PCIBank on the combined holdings of the SM group and the state-owned pension fund that she heads.

Dela Paz replaced Ferdinand Martin Romualdez, who was named vice chair along with Teresita Sy and Winston Garcia, president of the Government Service Insurance System. The EPCIB board also elected a new member, Edmond Tan, to replace resigned SM nominee Vicente Panlilio. *(See Cocktales, page B3.)*

The SM group has the single biggest block in EPCIB at 34 percent, followed by the SSS with a 29-percent stake. The Romualdez family owns about 8 percent of EPCIB while the GSIS controls 12.4 percent.

Romualdez confirmed Dela Paz's election, but when asked why this happened, he said: "You have to ask Cora (Dela Paz) and Tessie (Sy)." "It came as a surprise, it wasn't even on the agenda. But I hope Dela Paz will protect the interest of the members of the SSS," he added.

Sy formerly chaired BDO but quit the post to sit as the SM group's chief representative in the EPCIB board.

Romualdez had allied with Garcia in opposing a merger offer from the SM group's Banco de Oro Universal Bank.

BDO had proposed to swap up to 1.6 of its shares for every EPCIB share. As a second option offered by BDO, the swap ratio could also be based on the book values of both banks to be assessed by an independent accounting firm using International Accounting Standards.

The offer period set for the share-swap deal expired last Jan. 31 but BDO has not given up in its bid to merge with EPCIB.

A two-thirds vote among EPCIB shareholders is needed to effect any merger.

The election of a new chair in EPCIB did not mean that the SM group had won the SSS' ap

SSS/ B5

PRIVATE SECTOR FUND SUPPORT

New BOT agency pushed

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN URGED TO REvitalize its build-operate-transfer (BOT) initiatives, including the creation of a so-called BOT Authority, to boost private-sector investments in public infrastructure.

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda told reporters he was pushing for the amendment of the BOT Law to encourage the undertaking of more BOT projects as a way to pump-prime the economy while the government was still nursing a fiscal deficit.

House Bill No. 5002, which Salceda authored, seeks the creation of the BOT Authority. The proposed government agency will be tasked with facilitating all BOT infrastructure projects to be undertaken by the government

Under the bill, all government agencies, state-owned firms and local government units will be made to submit lists of proposed BOT projects to the BOT Authority for roadshow presentation abroad.

"In the present Philippine economic environment, the reality is that the only feasible way for most infrastructure to be built is through BOT," Salceda said in the bill's ex

NEW/ B5

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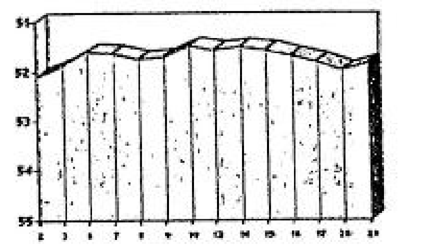


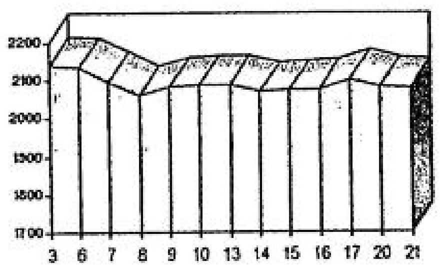
PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱ 51.83 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Feb. 22, 2006

¥ 118.59 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Feb. 22, 2006

GOLD: $551.70-552.20
per ounce Hong Kong, Feb. 22, 2006

STOCK MARKET



Stocks down on coup concerns

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.35 percent lower in thin trade yesterday as investors stayed out of the market on fresh security concerns after a blast at the presidential palace, dealers said.

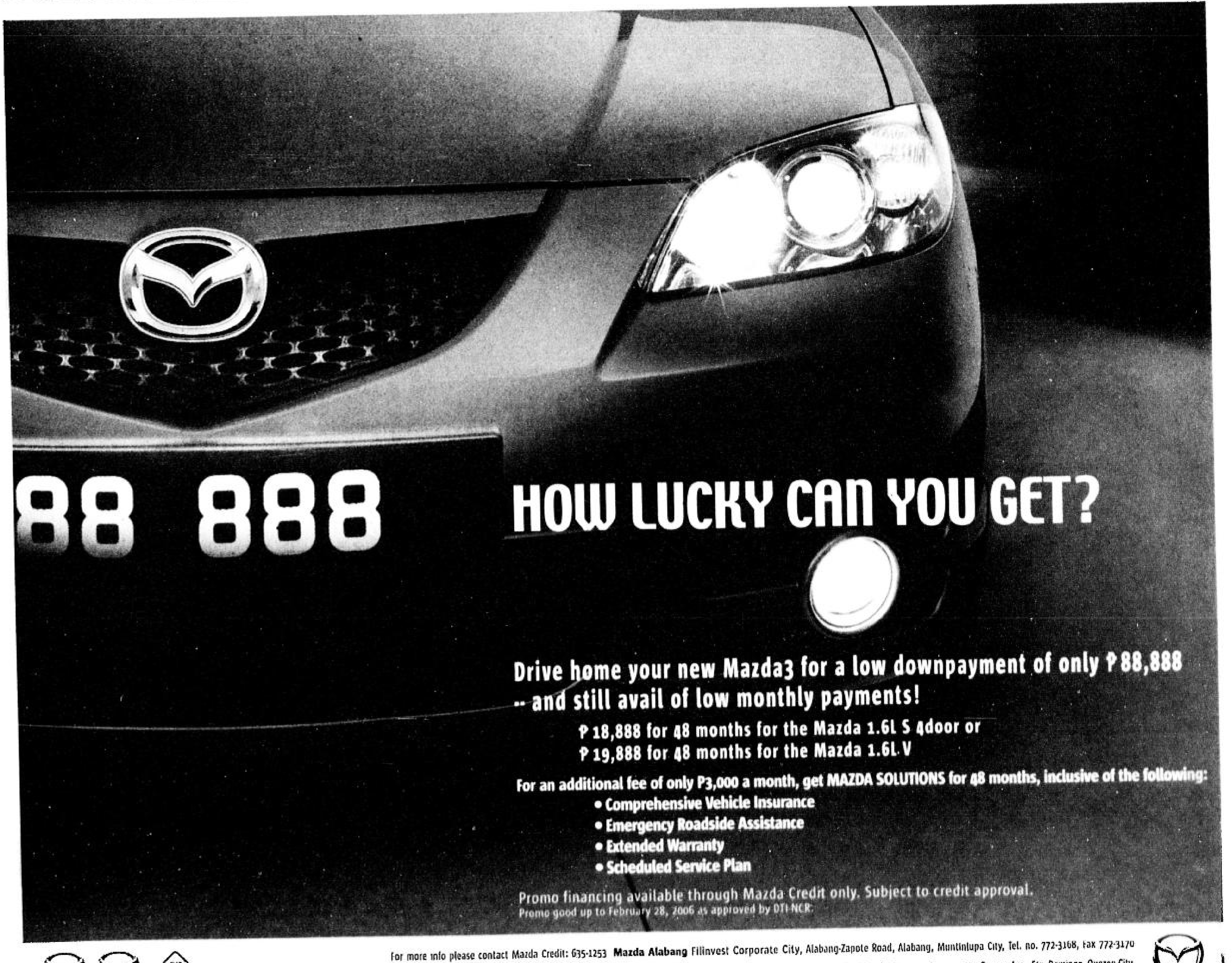
Gains in PLDT limited the downside.

The composite index fell 7.29 points to 2,076.81 after trading between 2,071.43 and 2,084.59. Turnover was 978 million shares worth P879 million.

Losers outnumbered gainers 57 to 28, with 54 stocks unchanged.

Dealers said that after news of the blast at

STOCKS/ B2



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Fitch upgrade boosts PLDT, Globe

JG Summit raises ₱1.5B in fresh offer

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE JG SUMMIT GROUP OF John Gokongwei Jr. secured a total of P1.5 billion in fresh funds from the sale of additional shares in its snacks and beverage subsidiary Universal Robina Corp. (URC).

Also, British Virgin Islands investment firm Arisaig Asean Fund Ltd. raised P125 million from the sale of an additional 7.36 million shares in URC, industry sources said.

Both shareholders generated roughly P1.6 billion in proceeds.

In its disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange Monday, the JG Summit Group said it sold 87.65 million shares in URC—worth P1.5 billion—out of the total 95.2 million greenshoe option.

JG Summit is composed of flagship firm JG Summit Holdings, Express Holdings Inc., and Robinsons Supermarket Corp.

The balance of 7.36 million shares, or P125 million, belongs to British Virgin Islands investment fund Arisaig Asean Fund Ltd., sources said.

URC and major shareholders last week raised P10.8 billion from the sale of 635 million shares at P17 apiece. URC's underwriter is UBS Investment Bank.

Including the over-allotment option, the total offer consisted of 730 million shares worth P12.4 billion.

URC shares rose 1.4 percent to P17.75 yesterday from P17.50.

Telcos' market values surge on improved ratings

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE VALUES OF THE TWO largest telecommunications firms in the country received a boost Tuesday after an influential debt watcher raised their outlooks on the back of improving sentiment toward the Philippine economy.

In a statement, FitchRatings said it had revised the outlook on the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.'s (PLDT) long-term currency rating from "negative" to "stable."

Fitch also raised the outlook for PLDT's main rival, Ayala-owned Globe Telecom Inc. from "negative" to "stable."

The upgrades represent decreased credit risks for both firms and will translate to cheaper borrowing costs when the firms raise funds from foreign creditors. The "stable" outlooks for both firms also make their existing foreign currency-denominated bonds more valuable on the secondary market.

Last week, Fitch also raised the outlook on the foreign currency debt of the national government from "negative" to "stable," following the progress made in enacting key fiscal reform measures like the two-stage implementation of the Reformed Value-Added Tax Law last Feb. 1.

Fitch's upgrade boosted PLDT's value on the stock exchange by P10 to P1,755 per share during yesterday's trading. Globe's share price also rose by P5 apiece to P825.

Shares of PLDT and Globe respectively were the first and the fourth most active traded stocks on the bourse yesterday.

Fitch said it had affirmed PLDT's long-term foreign currency rating for global bonds and senior notes at BB, and its convertible preferred stock at B+.

PLDT's long-term local currency rating has also been affirmed at BB+ with a stable outlook.

"PLDT's foreign currency and senior debt instrument ratings are constrained by the sovereign foreign currency rating," Fitch said, explaining the company's relatively low credit rating. "On the other hand, PLDT's long-term local currency rating is not constrained."

Fitch also affirmed Globe's long-term foreign currency rating and senior notes at BB, and its long-term local currency rating at BB+ with a stable outlook.

According to the Fitch website, PLDT has $1.6 billion worth of senior unsecured notes held by foreign creditors, and another $11 million worth of preferred stock held by foreign investors.

Globe, on the other hand, has $499.7 million worth of senior unsecured notes owed to foreign creditors, Fitch said.

Microsoft, Intel, PLDT extend aid to SMEs

By Ronnel W. Domingo

INTEL MICROELECTRONICS Philippines has tied up with the Department of Trade and Industry and two other major private firms to set up a technology shop that would allow small businesses to try out software and hardware brands before actually buying the products.

Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila yesterday said that the project, which also involves the Commission on Information and Communication Technology, would use Intel's digital platform technology, Microsoft Philippines' software, and Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.'s infrastructure to create the Business Technology Center.

Favila said that the center would enable entrepreneurs to gain an edge in business and technology, enhancing their productivity.

Located at the DTI Regional Operations Group Office in the Makati business district, the center will give SMEs the opportunity to try out the latest Intel Pentium D processor desktops, and Intel Centrino mobile technology notebooks, Favila said.

The trade chief added that small business owners may consult with DTI experts to learn how to automate their operations.

Also, the center will serve as a training venue for technology skills-building seminars for SMEs, which will teach them how to use PCs for their businesses.

The training modules also include the use of the Internet as a tool to create online presence and transaction methods, as well as lessons on online security and the protection of business systems.

"There are 655,000 SMEs nationwide, (comprising) 90 percent of all businesses in the country," Favila said. "They are crucial to the growth of the country, contributing to 69 percent of all employment and 32 percent of the country's output."

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of February 21, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	34.5	35	34.5	35	39,200
Bank of the Phil. Islands	58.5	59	58.5	59	317,200
China Banking Corp.	615	630	615	625	5,960
Citystate Savings Bank	19	19	19	19	500
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	64.5	64.5	64	64	128,300
International Exch. Bank	22.5	22.75	22.5	22.75	31,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	32.5	33	32	33	562,000
Philippine National Bank	31.5	31.5	31.5	31.5	600
Phil. Savings Bank	35	35	35	35	10,000
Security Bank Corp.	39	39	39	39	2,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	34	34.5	33.5	33.5	47,900
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Bankard Inc.	0.76	0.8	0.75	0.8	250,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	20,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	24.5	25	24.5	25	2,700
Manulife Financial Corp.	3230	3240	3230	3240	90
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	146	146	146	146	300
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2200	2300	2200	2200	3,040
Ivantage Corp.	0.75	0.78	0.75	0.76	5,100,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	45	45.5	45	45	1,003,200
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	42	42	41.5	42	434,500
Manila Electric Co. A	12.5	12.75	12.5	12.75	16,700
Manila Electric Co. B	19	19.25	18.75	19	456,600
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	1,243,000
Petron Corp.	4.65	4.65	4.55	4.55	1,000,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93	150,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.6	3.65	3.6	3.65	121,000
CADP Group Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	5,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	4,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	33.5	34	33.5	34	493,500
Pancake House Inc.	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	2,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1.76	1.76	1.72	1.72	341,000
San Miguel Corp. A	61.5	61.5	60.5	61	70,900
San Miguel Corp. B	81.5	81.5	80.5	81	107,400
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3	3	3	3	5,000
Universal Robina Corp	17.25	18	17.25	17.75	4,184,100
Vitarich Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	200,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	600,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.3	1.32	1.28	1.3	6,031,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.15	4.15	4.1	4.15	3,353,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Global Equities Inc.	0.07	0.0725	0.07	0.0725	600,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	400,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.22	0.25	0.22	0.25	1,250,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	65,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	23,000,000
Ayala Corp.	330	332.5	330	332.5	67,130
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.85	4.85	4.8	4.8	465,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	1,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.026	0.026	0.024	0.024	400,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.4	2.4	2.36	2.36	6,000
APC Group Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	900,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	10,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.87	0.89	0.87	0.89	350,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.62	1.62	1.62	1.62	1,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.61	0.63	0.61	0.63	110,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.98	0.98	0.96	0.97	2,920,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3	3	3	3	667,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.54	1.58	1.54	1.56	3,968,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	4.85	5	4.85	4.9	1,150,000
Pacifica	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.012	12,000,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.235	0.235	3,620,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	200,000
SM Investments Corp.	217	217	213	213	31,170
South China Resources Inc.	0.74	0.74	0.74	0.74	170,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.065	0.0675	0.065	0.065	5,200,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	10.75	10.75	10.5	10.75	11,438,700
Belle Corp.	0.98	0.98	0.96	0.97	1,700,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.235	0.235	0.235	0.235	3,170,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.58	1.58	847,000
C & P Homes Inc.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	29,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	780,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.44	0.45	0.44	0.45	4,870,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.69	0.69	0.68	0.68	560,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.24	1.26	1.2	1.24	3,167,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	1,000,000
Interport Res.	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	10,000,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	0.62	0.62	0.62	0.62	20,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.21	0.21	0.205	0.205	1,990,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	300,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.4	1.42	1.36	1.4	8,160,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	6,780,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.21	0.215	0.2	0.21	1,750,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	400,000
Primex Corp.	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	50,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	6.3	6.5	6.3	6.5	302,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.185	0.19	0.185	0.19	3,700,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.9	8	7.8	7.8	6,030,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.135	0.135	0.13	0.13	3,090,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	11	11.25	11	11.25	24,700
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.89	0.9	0.89	0.9	500,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	820	830	815	825	67,820
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.1	3.15	3.1	3.15	1,964,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1745	1765	1745	1755	136,510
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.155	0.155	700,000
Imperial Res.	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	3,700,000
Ionics Inc.	1.28	1.28	1.26	1.26	40,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	2,000,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.26	1.3	1.24	1.3	408,000
Philweb Corp.	0.027	0.028	0.026	0.027	81,600,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	17,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.66	1.66	1.66	1.66	14,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	11.5	11.5	11	11	243,600
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.77	0.77	0.77	0.77	60,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	62,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	20,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.78	1.78	1.76	1.78	2,000,000
Manila Jockey Club	3	3.05	3	3.05	20,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	250,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.37	0.37	600,000
EDUCATION					
Centro Escolar University	8.6	8.6	8.5	8.5	5,000
Far Eastern University	600	600	600	600	100
iPeople Inc.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	230,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Jardine Davies Inc.	22	22	22	22	1,000
Paxys Inc.	7.6	7.6	7.5	7.5	177,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	1.1	1.1	1.06	1.06	120,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	1.26	1.26	1.16	1.16	120,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	29,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	6.1	6.1	6	6.1	818,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.42	1.42	1.42	1.42	15,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.215	0.215	0.205	0.205	5,490,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.25	2,590,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	152,700,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.026	0.026	0.025	0.025	100,900,000
Omico Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.005	0.0055	326,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	1.66	1.66	1.62	1.64	2,479,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.74	1.74	1.7	1.7	3,296,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	27	27	26	27	218,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	70,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	50,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.25	0.26	23,110,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.008	0.0085	0.008	0.0085	4,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.44	0.47	0.43	0.47	1,240,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.48	0.51	0.46	0.51	870,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	4,000
PREFERRED					
PLDT (10% Pref) Series O	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Q	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series U	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	200
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	11.25	11.5	11.25	11.25	190,000

CURRENCIES

February 21, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.837521	1.000000	51.9080
Japan	Yen	0.007085	0.008460	0.4391
United Kingdom	Pound	1.460553	1.743900	90.5224
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.107924	0.128861	6.6889
Canada	Dollar	0.730057	0.871688	45.2476
Singapore	Dollar	0.514258	0.614024	31.8728
Australia	Dollar	0.620248	0.740576	38.4418
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.222366	2.653505	137.7381
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.223345	0.266674	13.8425
Brunai	Dollar	0.512684	0.612145	31.7752
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000090	0.000108	0.0056
Thailand	Baht	0.021371	0.025517	1.3245
UAE	Dirham	0.228034	0.272272	14.1331
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.194000	61.9782
Argentina	Peso	0.273253	0.326264	16.9357
Brazil	Real	0.395617	0.472367	24.5196
Denmark	Kroner	0.134014	0.160013	8.3060
India	Rupee	0.018893	0.022558	1.1709
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.225261	0.268962	13.9613
Mexico	New Peso	0.080272	0.095845	4.9751
Korea	Won	0.000866	0.001034	0.0537
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025889	0.030911	1.6045

Stocks down . . .

From page B1

the Palace, investors were additionally nervous given the upcoming 20th anniversary of the popular revolt that ended the 20-year rule of the late Ferdinand Marcos.

While some see the resulting losses as a buying opportunity, many failed to be convinced, with investors opting to stay on the sidelines.

An explosion rocked the Malacañang presidential palace grounds on Monday amid reports of failed recruitment attempts for a supposed coup attempt against President Macapagal-Arroyo, who survived a military mutiny in 2003.

There were no casualties or damage and the government ruled out explosives in the blast.

Early yesterday, government forces arrested one of five junior officers who escaped from military prison last month while on trial for the 2003 mutiny. AFP

Tessie strikes back

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

SM HEIRESS TERESITA SY PROVED YESTERDAY who was in control of Equitable PCIBank.

In a boardroom coup, Sy ally Corazon dela Paz was yesterday elected bank chair, replacing a stunned Ferdinand Martin Romualdez.

Romualdez, who had blocked the merger plan between Sy's Banco de Oro along with GSIS president Winston Garcia, was instead elected vice chair, along with Garcia and Sy.

According to the grapevine, lawyer Edmund Tan is just awaiting Bangko Sentral clearance to replace banker Vicente Panlilio, an erstwhile Sy ally, on the board.

The boardroom coup was a swift response to Friday's unexpected presentation by Panlilio, urging the bank's executive committee to go along with the GSIS plan to reverse the retirement of the 10-percent treasury shares and instead auction the block along with that of the GSIS' 12-percent stake.

The powerful executive committee is, incidentally, chaired by Sy no less. Yesterday's board meeting was attended by at least six bank advisers: Benguet Corp. chair/president/CEO Benjamin Philip Romualdez (older brother of Ferdinand Martin and husband of INQUIRER president Alexandra Prieto), Richard Leung, Teodoro Montecillo, Peter Garrucho, Antonio Pacis and Mike Roca.

According to the grapevine, Benjamin Philip Romualdez had carried a valiant but futile attempt to stop the boardroom changes and prevent his brother from being unseated.

As the smoke cleared, the election of Dela Paz, the Social Security System president, removed any lingering doubt as to the alliance of the pension fund's 29 percent with the Sy's 34-percent stake in the bank.

The next scenario that could happen now is, would Dela Paz be finally replaced as SSS chief by DBP president Reynaldo David?

La Salle's GMA solution

DE LA SALLE Greenhills, home to Black-and-White and anti-GMA mass actions, has executed a maneuver worthy of a Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to resolve its festering bully problem.

Instead of expulsion—like what its brothers have been doing, wagging their fingers at Malacañang—the exclusive school will allow the taekwondo bully to finish the school term, just as what the parents of the bully's victim had feared.

The school's decision was relayed to the victim's parents and lawyer after La Salle Greenhills president Brother Bernard Oca, instead of offering the worried parents a shoulder to cry on, unleashed his Accra lawyers to protect the school from any potential legal entanglements.

"Since a grievance is brought to the attention of the school authorities using legal means, then it follows that the school's legal counsel is called upon to respond accordingly," wrote grade school principal Evangeline Tamaca, invoking the spirit of St. La Salle (Because of space constraints, Cocktales has passed on the La Salle letter to the Letters to the Editor section.)

Tamaca said she only became aware of the bully problem in January, not in November as was alleged in Cocktales, after the male assistant principal concluded a two-month investigation on his problematic 15-year-old ward.

Worse, the assistant principal denied having been handed and subsequently losing a handwritten apology from the bully, which the victim's parents claim the assistant principal had borrowed from them in the course of his investigation.

"The incident in question had been investigated and a decision was rendered following the school's standard procedure for handling disciplinary cases by a discipline board and chaired by the assistant principal," Tamaca wrote.

In other words, despite the creation of a review board, the earlier decision made by the assistant principal, which is to transfer the bully to a model section and allow the bully to finish the term, stays. Oh, about the son of the victim's lawyer whom we reported the other day as also having been summoned to the principal's office, apparently the school found a condom in the student's wallet.

Given their swift reaction, the La Salle brothers apparently find the rubber sheath more corrosive to morality and community values than bullying, check forgery, allowance stealing, physical violence, cover-up and, a growing epidemic, speaking in forked tongues.

Money-go-round

- SEC Chair Fe Barin has cut through the legal stumbling blocks being invoked by the Mike Arroyo colleagues and prevailed on the publicly listed and cash-rich Philcomsat Holdings Corp. to hold a much delayed shareholders' meeting next month.
- WOULD-BE entrepreneurs who want tips on how to start a business should visit the Go NeGOsyo Expo, organized by GMA adviser Jose Concepcion III, at the Market!Market! this Friday and Saturday.

Heard through the grapevine

SPURRED by the local inroads by Korean minicars amid soaring gas prices, Toyota has

COCKTALES/ B5

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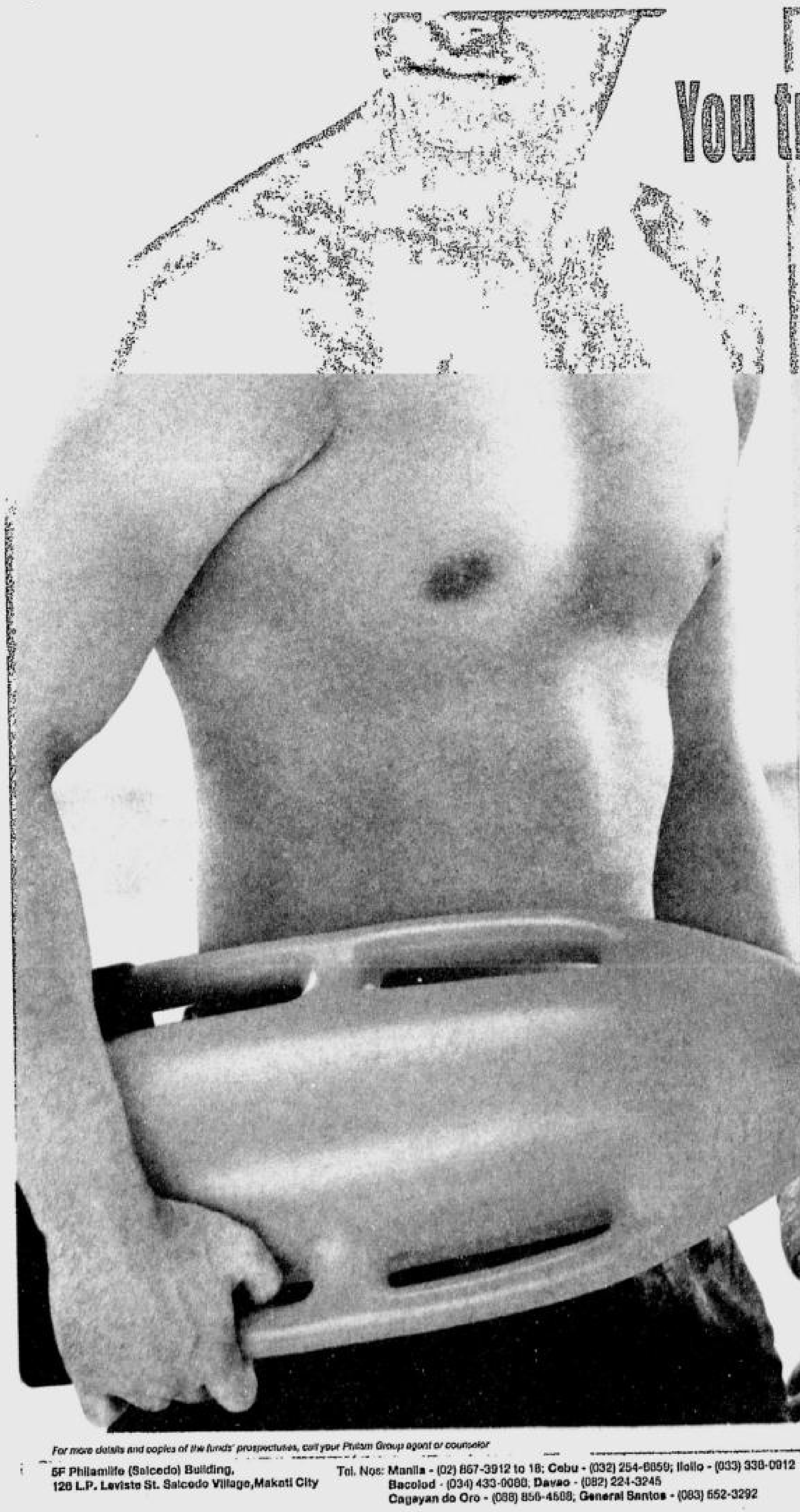

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Philam Fund, Inc.	₱10,000.00	14.78%
Philam Bond Fund, Inc.	₱5,000.00	12.28%
Philam Dollar Bond Fund, Inc.	US$ 2,000.00	8.34%
GSIS Mutual Fund, Inc.	₱5,000.00	13.85%

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Rules on power distribution services, open access OKd

By Abigail L. Ho

THE ENERGY REGULATORY Commission has issued the rules that will govern regulated electricity distribution services and open access.

The Distribution Services and Open Access Rules (DSOAR) sets the guidelines for the provision of services to both captive and contestable markets.

Once open access is implemented, the market will be divided into captive and contestable categories. The first is composed of power users that have no choice of power supplier, while the second is made up of users that can choose their electricity suppliers.

The DSOAR covers all distribution utilities, including those operating in economic zones.

Under the DSOAR, distribution utilities should be ready to provide a variety of services to the captive and contestable markets "in a reliable, efficient and economical manner."

For the contestable market, distribution utilities have to provide unbundled distribution wheeling service to retail electricity suppliers, the supplier of last resort, other distribution utilities, generators, and distribution, connection, assets and services (DCAS) to end-users.

For the captive market, the DSOAR requires distribution utilities to provide similar services as in the current market. Apart from those services, distribution utilities are required to make available, upon reasonable request, "all regulated services at rates, terms and conditions that are just and equitable to all customers."

The guidelines set the conditions for the supplier of last resort, or a regulated entity that has to serve end-users in the contestable market.

It also provides the procedure in establishing regulated service rates for distribution utilities pursuant to the distribution wheeling rate guidelines. The rules will also cover non-DWRG (distribution wheeling rates guidelines) entrants.

Taiwan firms plan to invest in Subic

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THREE MORE TAIWAN-based firms are looking at the possibility of putting up projects at the Subic freeport to expand their Southeast Asian operations, according to the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority.

SBMA Administrator Armand C. Arreza said the firms' representatives visited Subic last month to look for suitable locations for their projects.

Earlier, 10 Taiwanese companies committed to invest $1 billion in new projects at the zone. This commitment was made when Taiwan Economic Minister Ho Mei-Yueh came to the country late last year to attend a joint economic forum.

Arreza said the new batch of prospective Taiwanese investors were Asama Bicycle Corp., Overseas Chinese Credit Guarantee Fund and the Hsin Kuo Group.

"The entry of new companies here is a clear indication of the continued confidence of the Taiwanese business community to invest in the Philippines," he said.

Asama, a leading bike manufacturer in Asia, plans to put up a plant at the 23-hectare lot at the Taiwanese Industrial Park.

The Ksin Kuo group wants to produce shoe lines for women for export to Western markets, while Overseas Chinese Credit Guarantee Fund would offer financial credit to Taiwanese firms and other locators in Subic.

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Region V – Legazpi City
Tel. No. 480-7122

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

FOR THE SECURITY SERVICES FOR NFA REGION V

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY Region V, Legazpi City invites all interested private security agencies to register, apply for eligibility and to bid for the provisions of Security Services in the different installations of NFA Region V. The service contract to be bid shall cover the period May 17 to December 31, 2006 and shall be divided into two (2) lots as follow:

LOT	AREA COVERED	NO. OF GUARDS	BUDGET	SOURCE
1	Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur and Catanduanes	38	P 3,066,066.60	Corporate Operating Budget
2	Albay, Sorsogon and Masbate	47	P 3,800,484.90	

Registration forms/documents will be available for issuance at RBAC Secretariat, NFA Legazpi City upon paying the amount of P1,000.00 which is nonrefundable.

Only those who have been pre-qualified by the RBAC shall be issued eligibility/bid documents and participate in the Pre-Bidding conference and the Bidding Proper upon payment of a nonrefundable bidding fee of P3,000.00 per lot.

The schedule of bidding activities to be held at the NFA Regional Office, Legazpi City are as follows:

ACTIVITIES	DATE	TIME
Issuance of application forms for registration	Feb. 22 to March 8, 2006	8:00 am-5:00 pm
Deadline for submission of application for registration with required documents	March 17, 2006	5:00 pm
Issuance of Certificate of registration and Application for Eligibility to Bid	March 27-31, 2006	8:00 am-5:00 pm
Pre-bidding Conference	April 4, 2006	10:00 am
Submission of Eligibility Requirements	April 18, 2006	9:30 am
Opening of Sealed Bids	April 18, 2006	10:00 am

A Special Power of Attorney is required before the issuance of the documents for authorized representative in behalf of the bidder.

The entire bidding process shall be governed by RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

The prospective bidder must submit a single largest contract, the value of which adjusted to current price using the wholesale price index, and completed within the preceding two (2) years and similar to the contract to be bid must be at least fifty percent (50%) of the approved budget for the contract to be bid.

Other inquiries may be addressed to the RBAC Secretariat, NFA Region V, Legazpi City with telephone numbers (052) 480-7015 / 480-7933 / 820-0018.

NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS THEREOF, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITIES OR DEFECTS FOUND THEREIN, OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS OR AWARD TO ANY CONTRACTOR WHOSE BID IS CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE NFA OR TO THE GOVERNMENT

(Sgd.) JOSE B. GUEVARA
RBAC Chairman

(PDI–Feb. 22 & March 1, 2006)

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid
Republic of the Philippines
CITY OF NAGA

SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF THREE (3) UNITS ASIAN UTILITY VEHICLE

The *City Government of Naga*, through the ***Non-Office Budget for Protective Services Enhancement Fund and Financial Assistance to Naga City Philippine National Police (PNP) for 2006*** intends to apply the sum of ***TWO MILLION ONE HUNDRED SEVENTY TWO THOUSAND (Php2,172,000.00) Pesos***, being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payment under the contract for the *Supply and Delivery of three (3) units Asian Utility Vehicle*, *Project Reference Number: 2006-021*. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

Item No.	Qty.	Unit	Items	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)
1	3	units	GX, GL or similar-type Asian Utility Vehicle, model 2006, colored white, 2.5-liter diesel engine, power-steering, 5-speed manual transmission, with standard accessories as advertised by manufacturer, plus standard police siren with standard police rooftop blinker/ revolving light (horizontal type), painting of city government design on body, and warranty for the first three (3) years or 100,000 kms., whichever comes first	2,172,000.00

The *City Government of Naga* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the ***Supply and Delivery of three (3) units Asian Utility Vehicle***. Delivery of the GOODS is required within *one (1) month after receipt of Notice to Proceed*. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section I of the Bidding Documents, Instructions to Bidders (ITB).

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who will be determined as such during the post-qualification procedure. **Bidding will be conducted on a per-item basis.**

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from *City Government of Naga* and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below ***starting on Wednesday, March 8, 2006 from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.***

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of ***Two Thousand (Php2,000.00) Pesos***. The method of payment will be in CASH. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The *City Government of Naga* will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on ***Tuesday, March 14, 2006 at 2:00 PM at Metro PESO Conference Room.***

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below before ***2:00 PM on Monday, March 27, 2006.*** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of the following: ***Cash, certified check, cashier's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit; or, Bank Guarantee or, Surety Bond***, or, an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be on **Monday, March 27, 2006 at 2:00 PM at Metro PESO Conference Room**. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.

The *City Government of Naga* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Bids and Awards Committee (BAC)
MR. ZOILO R. BENITO, JR.
c/o BAC Secretariat, City Planning and Development Office
City Hall Compound, Naga City 4400
Tel. No. (054) 811-7190 / (054) 4732053 • Fax No. (054) 811-1286
Email address: bac@naga.gov.ph • Website: www.naga.gov.ph

(Sgd.) ZOILO R. BENITO, JR.
BAC Chairman

(PDI–Feb. 22 & March 1, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT
Pilar St., Zamboanga City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Zamboanga City Water District, through its Bids and Awards Committee II (BAC II), invites to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project : Janitorial Services to be Assigned at the Water Treatment Plant, Production Well and Watershed Area
Location : ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT
Brief Description : Janitorial Services
Approved Budget for the Contract : LOT 1: P2,820,000.00 (PR NO. 8812); LOT 2: P1,555,200.00 (PR NO. 8851)
Delivery Period :

Prospective Bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding, and have key personnel and equipment (owned, leased or under purchase) available for the prosecution of the project. The list of minimum equipment requirement is indicated in the Eligibility Forms. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examinations of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post Qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed as follows:

ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	February 20 to 28, 2006
2. Pre-Bid Conference	March 1, 2006
3. Opening of Bids	March 13, 2006
4. Bid Evaluation	March 15, 2006
5. Post-Qualification	March 16, 2006
6. Notice of Award	March 17, 2006
7. Issuance of Notice to Proceed	March 31, 2006

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Ten Thousand Pesos (P10,000.00) for Lot 1 & Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00) for Lot 2 to the Zamboanga City Water District Cashier.

The Zamboanga City Water District assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

(Sgd.) ALEJO S. ROJAS, JR.
BAC II Chairman

(PDI–Feb. 22, 2006)

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P1-B indemnity fund for poultry raisers proposed

Gov't taking avian flu virus threat seriously

By Christine A. Gaylican

PREPARING FOR THE WORST that may arise from the continuing avian flu virus threat, the Department of Agriculture is seeking at least P1 billion in budget for an indemnity fund for affected poultry raisers.

The agriculture department and the local commercial poultry raiser deemed it necessary to put up an indemnity fund to encourage backyard raisers whose stocks were affected by the virus to come out in the open. This will help prevent the spread of the virus.

The indemnity fund will be used to compensate the poultry raisers in case a mass culling of their stocks would be required.

Backyard raisers represent 80 percent of the country's poultry industry, with the big agribusiness companies accounting for the 20 percent.

Local raisers had proposed cash compensation equivalent to 100 percent of prevailing commercial value of the stocks or production cost based on age of the affected broilers or layers.

Agriculture Secretary Domingo F. Panganiban said the agency was having difficulty in securing the budget as the Senate and the Lower House had yet to commit to set aside funds for this purpose.

"We could not see a guarantee that the (indemnity fund) will not be prone to abuse," said Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. in a briefing.

Donor agencies including the United States Agency for International Development and the Japan International Cooperation Agency are offering financial or commodity assistance.

The National Avian Influenza Task Force (NAITF) proposed a tax-credit type of compensation for commercial poultry raisers that might be affected.

ITES investments in regions growing

By Ronnel W. Domingo

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY-enabled service companies have so far invested P500 million in areas outside Metro Manila.

Trade Undersecretary Carissa Cruz said 14 more ITES firms were scouting for possible locations in at least 17 provinces and cities outside the capital where they could expand their operations.

Cruz, who is in charge of the Department of Trade and Industry's regional operations group, said data regarding the flow of investments and spread of business process outsourcing ventures and call centers into the regions still needed to be verified.

Commissioner Dondi Mapa of the Commission on Information and Communications Technology earlier said investors had to be informed about the readiness of regional urban centers to host ITES operations.

"These (areas) sit on a $10-billion fiber optic network that can serve as backbones for global connectivity," Mapa said. "There are existing infrastructure facilities—including six submarine cables and five satellite installations—that would allow these cities to be connected with the rest of the world."

He was referring to the cities of Zamboanga, General Santos, Cagayan de Oro, Bacolod, Cebu, Naga, Iloilo, Davao and Dumaguete. He also identified the provinces of Leyte, Bohol, Bataan, Pampanga, Bulacan, Pangasinan, Camarines Sur and the Southern Tagalog region as among the areas that were ready to host ITES operations.

Local governments have been actively pushing for the development of their areas as IT hubs. In Leyte, for example, the provincial board has been promoting its "stable work force composed of skilled and trainable people, lower wage rates and available telecommunications infrastructure."

According to the DTI, Leyte "boasts of readily available office space, adequate air, sea and land transportation services and facilities that made the Visayan province foreigner-friendly."

DTI data further showed that in school year 2002-2003, graduates of Leyte's 48 colleges and universities comprise about half of the region's 14,000 graduates, and about 37 percent of the region's 97,000 students in the tertiary level.

Also, the province hosts the Leyte Information and Communications Park, which can accommodate ITES firms like call centers given its adequate power and water supply, and available telephone and Internet systems.

Peso slips ...

From page B1

month's end, with coup talk leading to further dollar-buying," Pante said.

Based on the technical chart, Pante said the peso-dollar rate was showing a correction-consolidation phase bounded by 52.25 and 52.75 to $1.

SSS chief ...

From page B1

proval of its merger offer, BDO president Nestor Tan said in an interview.

"It's just a vote for the new chair and we supported her because we believe she's capable and will be good for the organization," Tan said.

He said BDO's offer was an entirely different matter for the shareholders to vote on after studying the proposal.

Tan said the SSS would still have to complete its own assessment and would have to prove to its constituents that the deal would be good for them.

Asked whether he was confident that BDO's offer would progress, Tan said: "I don't know."

Dela Paz and Sy were not available for comment as of press time.

EPCIB reported a 33-percent jump in net profit to P2.5 billion in 2005, but the figure could be subject to revisions as it was not yet fully compliant with new International Accounting Standards (IAS).

New BOT ...

From page B1

planatory note.

The bill likewise calls for the creation of public-private infrastructure development committee, which will formulate policies regarding private-sector investments, establish and modify current infrastructure plans to encourage more private-sector participation, and promote private investments.

The committee will be an inter-agency body composed of representatives from various government agencies like the Department of Budget and Management, and from private sector groups like the Philippine Contractors Association.

Salceda said his proposed amendment to the BOT Law sought to enunciate a clear-cut policy on government support to private sector investment projects, and to institutionalize a fair, honest and competitive procurement process.

Cocktales

From page B3

decided to bring back a more competitively priced Echo, to be renamed Yaris after its European nameplate, early next year.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

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E-mail: pr_motoring@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

CAR OF THE YEAR UPDATE

SUV showdown from entry level to ultra luxury

Text by Tessa R. Salazar
Photos by Ulysses Ang, motioncars.com

SPORTS UTILITY VEHICLES showed they would never wane in popularity despite oil price increases as they flaunted their stuff from Feb. 18 to 19 at a private track in Forest Hills, Antipolo, Rizal, during the fifth week of the second Car Of The Year (Coty) test-fest.

Luxury SUVs that went through instrumented and subjective tests were Dodge Durango Limited, Ford Explorer Eddie Bauer, Isuzu Alterra 4WD, Kia Sorento CRDi, Mitsubishi Montero Sport GLS and the Volvo XC70 Cross Country fielded by Viking Cars.

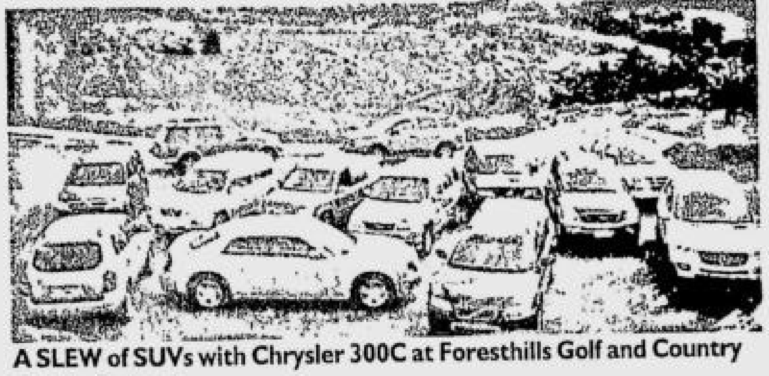
The entry level SUVs that participated were Honda CR-V 2.4 i-VTEC, Hyundai Tucson 4x2 CRDi, Mazda Tribute 3.0 V6, Nissan X-Trail 250X and Toyota Fortuner 2.7G.

The Mercedes-Benz ML 350 was the lone entry in the ultra-luxury SUV category last weekend.

Headturner Chrysler 300C, for the luxury car category, also underwent testing last weekend.

Other vehicles that didn't make it during the respective category dates will be tested on the Feb. 25 and 26 "catch-up" test-fest. BMW is fielding in its 1 to 7 series and X3, and X5 this weekend.

The over 60 motoring journalists from the Philippines—comprising the Car Awards Group Inc. (Cagi)—had just concluded the fifth week of a scheduled two-month test-fest involving putting the vying cars at their paces and casting "ballots" based on the vehicles' actual measured performances and the journalists' "feel" of the drive.



A SLEW of SUVs with Chrysler 300C at Foresthills Golf and Country Club in Antipolo

Tests

The technical course at Forest Hills tests an engine's torque going a steep 35-degree incline. It reveals poorly sorted suspensions. How? The tracks off-camber turns, downhill esses and even a wicked dip can lift a driver off his or her seat at only 50 kilometer per hour.

A series of fast and slow corners can test a gearbox's responsiveness, be it manual or automatic. Several cul de sacs can test the turning radius of a car or truck. Braking tests are also done in the course.

The unveiling of the Car of the Year-Philippines is set on March 30 at the Rockwell Tent, The Powerplant Mall, Makati City. The public unveiling of the winner will coincide with the opening of the Manila International Motor Show on April 6 at the World Trade Center, Roxas Boulevard.

Coty-P is sponsored by the Manila Motor Show, Rockwell Land Corp., Philippine Allied Corp. (sole distributor of Bridgestone tires in the country), Petron, Standard Insurance, road safety advocate Federal Express Corp., Manila North Tollways Corp (MNTC), Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI), Automobile Association Philippines (AAP), Fusion R Motorsports and motioncars.com.

Toyota introduces new prexy

LEADING AUTOMOTIVE company Toyota Motor Philippines has officially introduced its new president, Hiroshi Ito, who begins his assignment in the Philippines this February. Ito is the successor of Nobuharu Tabata, who concluded his four-year term as TMP president.

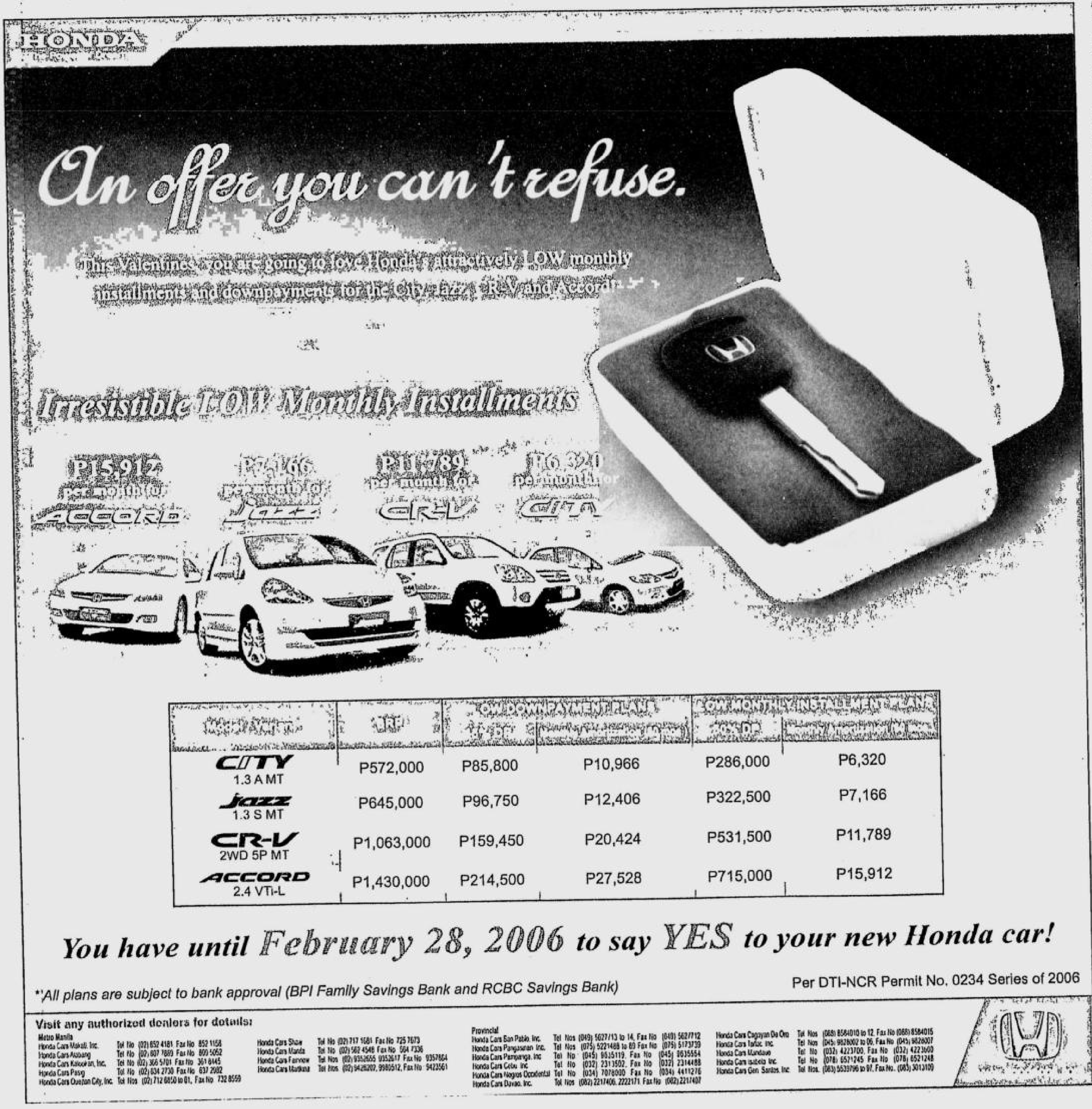
Ito brings with him more than 30 years of experience with Toyota Motor Corp., the world's second largest automaker, and its global distributors in North America and Oceania regions. He graduated from college in Japan's Hitotsubashi University with a degree in BS Commerce.

Experience

His experience with Toyota started in 1975 where he handled affairs concerning Africa Division. During this time, he took the opportunity to expand his knowledge with an MBA at University of Penn (Wharton) in the United States.

In 1988, he became senior executive coordinator for sales operations of Toyota Motor Sales, US. After five years, he returned to TMC where he became manager of North America Division, and was later on assigned as deputy general manager of International Public Affairs Division.

His global experience was further enhanced with his most recent assignment as executive director of Toyota New Zealand Ltd. from 2001 to 2005.



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		[illegible]	[illegible]	50% DP	[illegible]
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JAZZ 1.3 S MT	P645,000	P96,750	P12,406	P322,500	P7,166
CR-V 2WD 5P MT	P1,063,000	P159,450	P20,424	P531,500	P11,789
ACCORD 2.4 VTi-L	P1,430,000	P214,500	P27,528	P715,000	P15,912

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0234 Series of 2006

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Norkis reassesses subcompact models

By Charles E. Buban

WHEN THE FIRST BATCHES OF secondhand Daihatsu Mira and Suzuki Alto units were delivered to Norkis assembly plant in Compostela, Cebu in 2004, the people there knew right away they have the foundation to build a car for the masses.

"With gasoline prices on the rise nationwide and motorists forking over fistfuls of pesos to power their cars, we saw an opportunity not only to market more fuel-efficient vehicle models, but also to grab important market share in the process," said Norberto Quisumbing Jr., founder and chair of Norkis Group, which rebuilt the two Japan-sourced vehicle models through its subsidiary, Porta Coeli Industrial Corp. Inc. (PCIC).

The result was the launch and subsequent marketing of the five-door hatchback Privacy Commuter and the three-door hatchback Privacy Roadster in the Philippines last year.

At odds

This move by Norkis to market small, less powerful cars is clearly at odds with a lot of Filipino consumers' apparently ceaseless penchant for bigger, more powerful vehicles, and no one expects the Privacy Commuter and the Privacy Roadster to reverse that trend.

As a matter of fact, Norkis' idea is to offer efficient, alternative transportation for instances when a conventional vehicle is overkill.

"The Privacy Commuter and the Privacy Roadster make a practical mode of transport especially if one is just going for a short commute or when driving within the city where traffic is usually heavy and parking slot is hard to find," he said.

Changing requirements

However, Quisumbing said their buyers are also changing when it comes to their requirements for having a subcompact car like the Privacy Commuter and the Privacy Roadster.

"While before subcompact cars were made as cheaply as possible for entry-level consumers, that attitude has changed. Buyers now want something more other than just good fuel mileage and low price," he said.

It was this reason Quisumbing said Norkis is now looking for ways to make the two vehicle models more "hip" to its buyers.

> Buyers now want something more other than just good fuel mileage and low price

Top priority

"Pushing these two car models is top priority for Norkis. In fact, we are currently working on how to make these cars fun to look at as well as to drive," he said.

Quisumbing said a number of their Privacy Commuter and Privacy Roadster units are being outfitted with sportier trims as well as cool design elements to give it a youthful and fun appearance.

"We want to sell these vehicles to the younger segment of the market so we are looking into several designs that would appeal to them," explained Quisumbing who added that if gasoline prices remain high, the company should be ready with these redesigned variants soon as consumers may be forced to shift down to smaller vehicles.

Three's the charm

PROMOTIONAL EVENTS IN THE MOTORING industry are usually cut and dry propositions. There's the usual product launch, more noontime show masquerading as a corporate event, complete with dancers, showbiz hosts and glitz. You have the media test drives, where manufacturers hope against hope that the hacks from the motoring, business and the lifestyle beats don't thrash their precious few media units. Fewer still are the full on speed sessions—track days that allow the vehicle dynamics and innate human competitiveness to prevail.

MY DRIFT

Andre Palma

Finding the right fit and flavor for an event is very elusive and often missed by a mere few minute details. Once in a while though, there comes along a PR affair that hits home with the ever-important notes of product demonstration, fun and camaraderie. Alright, I'll admit that "unimpressed" would be a very polite term to describe my approach to many past events for the motoring media.

Faced with the issue of displaying the advantages of their new Comfort Access keyless entry system, BMW needed to think way out of the box for an answer. Let me put it to the motoring public then. What if you've got an interesting vehicle feature, a new neat and cool way to open and start your car, how would you attempt to introduce it to some of the more jaded members of the press?

Right off the top of my mind, the 30-minute infomercial sounds like the right solution. Great if one is plying bust cream or all-purpose cleanser, but I cannot imagine a car being bought through this marketing method. "Call now and get a free set of floor mats with your new SUV... but wait, if you are among the first 50 callers, get a pair of fuzzy dice for your rear view mirror!" I didn't think you'd agree either.

Cars and their features are better taken in the context of a drive, in whatever shape, form or level of difficulty. More so because this particular Comfort Access system was featured on the E90 3-Series, a vehicle that demands to be driven to be truly appreciated.

Gymkhana

Enter the general concept of a gymkhana. Take one short, tight and technical course, preferably in the parking lot of a commercial establishment, sprinkle liberally with U-turns, reverse gear runs and some sort of out-of-car stunt and voila: an interesting time is more or less assured. With the concept for the ever essential driving segment out of the way, how would one feature a keyless entry and start-up system? Amusingly, shopping bags enter the equation at this moment.

Each driver was tasked to obtain the all-important keys of the event's designated 320i from under a glass case, and then made to pick up two whole armfuls of shopping bags. For reasons likely attributed to their domestic situations, many of the male contestants moved with the large bags as if unencumbered. Before the driver was to assume the reins of 320i for the track session, the said shopping bags had to be deposited in the trunk of the vehicle.

Both the boot-lid and the front door were supposed to be opened merely by a touch of the driver's hand, while the vehicle's keys were in the pockets or handbag of the competitor. A signal from the key itself allows the vehicle to recognize that its operator is nearby and allows both the doors and the ignition to be worked in a relatively easy fashion.

THREE'S/ B8

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1.6 GSX AT	770,000	65,000	40,798	32,270	22,990	18,437	16,169	415,000	7,700
1.8 GS AT	815,000	70,000	43,182	34,156	24,334	19,514	17,114	435,000	8,150
1.8 GT AT	908,000	136,200	48,109	38,056	27,110	21,741	19,067	500,000	8,000
200	1,140,000	110,000	60,402	47,776	34,037	27,296	23,939	600,000	11,400
200X	1,250,000	115,000	66,230	52,386	37,322	29,929	26,249	675,000	12,500
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Traffic (police) traps

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

ARE YOUR NERVES FRAZZLED WHENEVER you have to drive through anarchic Metro Manila traffic? Well, you can add to your daily angst the traps set by traffic authorities for motorists.

One such trap is found at the corner of Ortigas Avenue and Connecticut Street beside the Greenhills Shopping Center in San Juan. If you intend to turn right from Connecticut on Ortigas toward Santolan Road, you will see a sign posted on the corner saying: "Turn right at any time with care."

As a motorist, you would interpret the sign to mean that you can turn right on Ortigas, even when the light is red, if you wait for a gap in the oncoming traffic. That is how I interpreted it a few weeks ago, so even though I saw two uniformed Metro Manila Development Authority traffic officers standing on the island separating the main lanes and service road of Ortigas, I turned right when there were no more oncoming vehicles.

Stopped

Then I carefully moved toward the leftmost lane as I intended to turn left on Wilson Street. The two MMDA officers immediately stopped me. When I politely asked them why, using the respectful *"ho,"* one of them said that I had committed a traffic violation by turning right when the light was red.

And when I politely told them about the traffic sign on the corner saying "Turn right at any time with care," he asserted that the sign means motorists can turn right at any time, but only on the service road, not on Ortigas Avenue itself. So why doesn't the sign include the words "on the service road"? I didn't bother to ask, knowing how useless it is to argue with the MMDA.

Another traffic police trap is found at the corner of Ninoy Aquino Avenue and Naia Road in Parañaque. If you are driving along Ninoy Aquino Avenue and plan to turn right on Naia Road to go to the Philippine Airlines' Naia Terminal 2, be sure to stick to the rightmost lane of Ninoy Aquino Avenue many, many meters before reaching the corner. Otherwise you may be apprehended by a traffic policeman lurking behind the bushes and charged with "swerving."

When it comes to U-turns set up by the MMDA, swerving is perfectly okay and safe

Ironic

What's ironic about the "swerving" thing is that motorists have to do a lot of swerving to avoid being blocked or hit by vehicles making U-turns on roads pockmarked with U-turns. When it comes to U-turns set up by the MMDA, swerving is perfectly okay and safe.

Before Manila Mayor Lito Atienza installed the Baywalk with its huge, seconds-counting traffic lights on Roxas Boulevard, there was a traffic light at the Pedro Gil (formerly Herran) intersection. Drivers turning left on Pedro Gil from Roxas Blvd. had to wait for the traffic light to turn green, but those proceeding along Roxas Blvd. toward Pasay City did not have to since there was no traffic entering Roxas from Pedro Gil.

I remember once running a yellow light at that very spot on my way to the Philippine Plaza Hotel. A policeman, seemingly appearing out of nowhere, stopped me. He showed me a handwritten list of traffic violations with the corresponding fines and told me to pay up for beating a red light. Naturally, the fine was unusually heavy because he had probably written the list of fines himself.

Best story

But the best traffic (police) trap story comes from a friend of mine, a businesswoman who was rushing from an appointment in Fort Bonifacio to a meeting at a restaurant in the Ayala Center, Makati. After crossing Edsa from McKinley Road, she quickly turned left from Ayala Avenue into Hotel Drive, Ayala Center, although the traffic light was no longer green.

A policeman stopped her and asked for her driver's license. Since she wanted to get to her meeting on time, the businesswoman handed over a hundred-peso bill together with her license and said, *"Pasiyensiya na, boss. Late na 'ko sa miting.* (Have patience, boss. I'm already late for a meeting.)" The policeman grinned and replied, *"Ma'am, dalawa po kami, eh.* (Ma'am, there are two of us, eh.)"

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: Computers help us to do stupid things faster.

* * *

E-mail comments to asevilla@inquirer.com.ph.

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On truckers and a letter from Gumaca

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

GREED IS WHAT MAKES MANY of our truckers break the law. I say this in light of the recent dastardly act made by truckers when they recently blocked the road leading to the North Luzon Expressway, my favorite highway.

Because Ping de Jesus, the upright NLEX official, wants the law on overweight trucks implemented at NLEX no matter what, truckers countered by the foulest of means: Block the path of law-abiding citizens wishing to use the NLEX.

Only in the Philippines.

Here's another case of a law that an incorruptible citizen wants implemented to the hilt but is being harassed—even threatened I heard with bodily harm—by law-breakers themselves: the truckers.

The law (Republic Act 8794 or the Anti-Overloading Law) says the weight limit for vehicles allowed to use our roads nationwide is 13.5 metric tons per axle. Everybody follows the law—alas, except most of our nation's truckers.

Thus, the law has been wantonly broken since time immemorial—alas, because of corruption mainly committed by many of our authorities (Philippine National Police and Land Transportation Office) that are supposed to enforce it.

The law is there to protect our roads from getting destroyed so easily

The law is there to protect our roads from getting destroyed so easily.

Alas, seemingly only Ping de Jesus wants it implemented—and, yes, with the toughness of a jail warden.

Now you know why our roads, our national roads mostly, are always in an utter state of disrepair.

Don't blink, Ping. The people are behind you.

* * *

Here's a letter from the Libre sports editor, Dennis U. Eroa, a great son of Gumaca, Quezon.

"Your column regarding the sad state of Maharlika highway caught my interest. And why not? My family and I endured a punishing ride while we went on a week-long vacation during the holidays in Gumaca, Quezon.

"Our bodies ached upon arrival in Gumaca, which is eight hours away from Olongapo. The trip was pure hell.

"As you well know, I traced my roots in Gumaca, birthplace of the great Sen. Lorenzo Tañada, before fate intervened and transplanted me to Olongapo City.

"Indeed, the road condition was a shame and I share the frustration and anger of the INQUIRER letter senders.

"There's no doubt that the quality of the roads left much to be desired and as a taxpayer, I challenge not only Quezon's political leaders but those connected with the highways department to wake up and think of the common good.

"Something is terribly wrong at Maharlika way. On the way to Gumaca, we used the old zigzag and we're surprised to note that countless *mamamasko* lined the roads.

"Going back to Olongapo, we used the zigzag diversion road and it was a very, very bad decision. The roads were torture. Even the diversion roads in Lucena, Pagbilao, etc.. were so bad that I needed to rethink my driving strategies.

"It is gladdening that a popular and respected columnist found time to write about the true state of the Maharlika. I very well know that while you're a Pangasinense, you've fallen in love with a Quezonian—from Calauag.

"Mabuti na lang kundi kawawa naman hindi lang ang mga taga-Quezon, kundi ang sambayanang biyahero patungo sa Bicol at Bondoc Peninsula.

"I hope that things will be different next year because I can't escape the lure of my hometown and will certainly motor back.

"By the way, my high school classmates told me that a buddy from the Gumaca Provincial (now National) High School is now calling the shots at Region IV highways department.

"So, I call on RT, if he still remembers me, to live up to the spirit of the Gumacaqueños. I remain confident that the class engineer, a model student and corps commander during his GNHS days, will be up to the task and will not disappoint his *kababayans*.

"After all, *bumaka*, which means to fight, is the name given to Gumaca by its original inhabitants. Toast for excellent roads."

* * *

QUOTE ME. Shoo away would-be carjackers by hanging out in the mall or in any populated spot, not staying inside the vehicle when waiting for someone.

Three's the charm

From page B7

Cone-laden course

Once underway, under the professional tutelage of expert wheelman/Jedi Master Kookie Ramirez, each driver had to finish the cone-laden course in the least amount of time. Dropped cones would translate into time penalties so severe that one could kiss the afternoon's results away with any such infraction.

For the record, BMW Philippines' Lito German nailed three innocent rubber pylons that afternoon. At the end of one run down the gymkhana course, the finishing driver then relayed the keys and bags to his teammate for the day. The course was then run in reverse with the cumulative team time coming to a stop once the bags were out of the car and the key back in its glass case.

The 10 or so tandems never had a chance. Once the driving gods placed the fates of C! Magazine's Iñigo Roces and this writer in the same timed run, I was confident that the issue was for all intents and purposes, settled. Between Iñigo's able, steady and intuitive operation of the E90 and my deft, veteran approach to the Tao of Quick Movement with Wife's Shopping, victory was, quite literally, in the bag.

Both of us took home an E90 for that event, with mine taking a prominent, permanent space at my place of work. The car is on top of my computer monitor, right within arm's reach, allowing me to nervously spin its scale model tires, in a desperate attempt to help overcome writer's block. Just like today.

Republic of the Philippines
Supreme Court
Manila

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Supreme Court through the Committee on Bids invites prospective bidders who are authorized distributors and/or authorized resellers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following:

Name of Project	Approved Budget	Source of Funding
LOT 1 - OFFICE SUPPLIES (1st QUARTER 2006)	P 13,852,100.64	General Appropriations Act 2006
LOT 2 - PRINTING SUPPLIES (1st QUARTER 2006)	P 1,155,385.00	General Appropriations Act 2006
LOT 3 - MAINTENANCE SUPPLIES (1st QUARTER 2006)	P 1,150,394.30	General Appropriations Act 2006
LOT 4 - HEWLETT PACKARD TONER, INK AND RIBBON (1st QUARTER 2006)	P 2,684,980.10	General Appropriations Act 2006
LOT 5 - BROTHER TONER AND INK (1st QUARTER 2006)	P 1,117,129.00	General Appropriations Act 2006
LOT 6 - EPSON RIBBON (1st QUARTER 2006)	P 589,424.00	General Appropriations Act 2006

PERIOD OF DELIVERY:

Twenty five (25) calendar days after issuance of Purchase Order (P.O.)

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES:

A. FOR LOT 1, LOT 2, AND LOT 3:

I. PRE-BID CONFERENCE

The pre-bid conference will be held on:

Date : 01 MARCH 2006, Wednesday
Venue : Conference Room, Ground Floor, Centennial Building, Supreme Court, Padre Faura St., Ermita Manila
Time : 1:00 p.m. (for LOT 1)
2:00 p.m. (for LOT 2)
3:00 p.m. (for LOT 3)

II. SUBMISSION OF ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS AND OPENING OF BIDS

On the bidding, the legal requirements for eligibility of prospective bidders must be personally submitted by the duly authorized representative, and the bids will be opened, thereafter, in the presence of the bidders or their authorized representatives, to be held on:

Date : 15 March 2006, Wednesday
Venue : Conference Room, Ground Floor, Centennial Building, Supreme Court, Padre Faura St., Ermita, Manila
Time : 10:00 a.m. (for LOT 1)
11:00 a.m. (for LOT 2)
1:00 p.m. (for LOT 3)

B. FOR LOT 4, LOT 5, AND LOT 6:

I. PRE-BID CONFERENCE

The pre-bid conference will be held on:

Date : 03 MARCH 2006, Friday
Venue : Conference Room, Ground Floor, Centennial Building, Supreme Court, Padre Faura St., Ermita, Manila
Time : 1:00 p.m. (for LOT 4)
2:00 p.m. (for LOT 5)
3:00 p.m. (for LOT 6)

II SUBMISSION OF ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS AND OPENING OF BIDS

On the bidding, the legal requirements for eligibility of prospective bidders must be personally submitted by the duly authorized representative, and the bids will be opened, thereafter, in the presence of the bidders or their authorized representatives, to be held on:

Date : 17 March 2006, Friday
Venue : Conference Room, Ground Floor, Centennial Building, Supreme Court, Padre Faura St., Ermita, Manila
Time : 10:00 a.m. (for LOT 4)
11:00 a.m. (for LOT 5)
1:00 p.m. (for LOT 6)

Prospective bidders must not be related to the head of the procuring entity or any member of the Committee on Bids or its Secretariat either by consanguinity or affinity up to the third civil degree.

Interested bidders may secure eligibility requirements and bid documents from **The Secretariat, Committee on Bids, Property Division, 3rd Floor Annex Building, Supreme Court**, after payment of a non-refundable fee of **One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00) for LOT 1, LOT 2, LOT 3, LOT 4, and LOT 5, and Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00) for LOT 6**, prior to the conduct of pre-bid conference. For additional information, the bidders may contact the **Secretary, Atty. Ennar R.C. Cabanilla at telefax no. 525-1270 or Ms. Norma C. Josue at tel. no. 526-8419.**

The Committee on Bids reserves the right to: 1) reject any or all bids, 2) waive any defects or informalities therein, 3) or accept any bid/s or offer/s which it may consider to be the most advantageous and beneficial to the government.

15 February 2006

(Sgd.) JOSE P. PEREZ
Chairman

(PDI-Feb 15 & 22, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
DAVAO CITY WATER DISTRICT
Km. 5, J.P. Laurel Ave., Davao City
Tel. # 221-9400

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

1. The *Davao City Water District*, with the *Approved Budget for 2006* intends to apply the sum of (**Pls. see item 2**) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for ***JANITORIAL SERVICES AND SECURITY SERVICES***. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening
2. The *Davao City Water District* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for:

SECURITY SERVICES in various DCWD facilities for a period of one (1) year	ABC for one (1) year contract: Php: 8,187,744.00
JANITORIAL SERVICES in various DCWD Offices for a period of one (1) year	ABC for one (1) year contract: Php: 1,146,960.00

The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from Davao City Water District and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. up to 5:00 p.m.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of non-refundable fee in the amount of

SECURITY SERVICES	P2,000.00/PACKAGE
JANITORIAL SERVICES	P1,500/PACKAGE

The method of payment will be on Cash Basis. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

6. The *Davao City Water District* will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on ***MARCH 09, 2006 at 9:00 o'clock A.M. for Security Services and 2:00 P.M. for Janitorial Services at DCWD BAC-A Secretariat Office, J.P. Laurel Ave., Bajada, Davao City.***
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before ***MARCH 21, 2006 at 9:00 o'clock A.M. for Security Services and MARCH 21, 2006 @ 2:00 P.M. for Janitorial Services*** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of cash or Manager's check and in the amount of ***P81,877.00 for Security Services and P11,469.00 for Janitorial Services***. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be at ***DCWD BAC-A Secretariat Office, J.P. Laurel Ave., Bajada, Davao City*** on the following schedule

SECURITY SERVICES	March 21, 2006 @ 9:00 A.M
JANITORIAL SERVICES	March 21, 2006 @ 2:00 P.M.

Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

9. The *Davao City Water District* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Davao City Water District
BAC-A
J.P. Laurel Ave., Bajada, Davao City
221-9400 (8000)
dcwd@water.gov.ph
224-6392
www.davao-water.gov.ph

(Sgd.) VIRGINIA S. MARIMON
BAC-A Chairperson

(PDI-Feb. 15 & 22, 2006)

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF TRAILER MOUNTED HYDRAULIC DRILLING MACHINE FOR DEEP WELL DRILLING (QUIRINO STATE COLLEGE)

The Quirino State College (QSC) invites all potential Bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Procurement of Trailer Mounted Hydraulic Drilling Machine for Deep Well Drilling, Quirino State College, Diffun, Quirino.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedure as specified in IRR of RA 9183 and is restricted to organizations with seventy-five percent (75%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines. Bidders must have a creditable tract record of ten years as a vendor of the Hydraulic Drilling Machine to various organizations (Private, Government, Government-Owned/Controlled Corporations) and meet the minimum eligibility requirements stated in the eligibility documents.

Interested bidders shall secure the eligibility documents at the Bids and Awards Committee, Julian A. Alvarez Hall, Quirino State College, Diffun, Quirino, with telefax no. (078) 694-70-60 upon presentation of Letter of Intent and current Contractor's License.

The Eligibility & Bidding Requirements and schedule of activities are as follows:

Approved Budget for the Contract: P12,600,000.00	
Issuance of Eligibility & Bidding Documents	February 16-23, 2006 at the JAAH Bldg., QSC Diffun, Quirino
Deadline of Submission of Eligibility Documents	February 28, 2006, 2:00 p.m. Office of the BAC Chair, JAAH Bldg., QSC Diffun, Quirino
Pre-Bid Conference	March 6, 2006
Submission and Opening of Bids	March 20, 2006, 9:00 a.m., QSC JAAH, Diffun, Quirino.
Cost of Bidding Documents	P2,500.00 (non-refundable)

Application for eligibility will be based on a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria prescribed in the eligibility documents. Only Bidders passing the eligibility check can participate in the Pre-Bidding Conference.

QSC reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

(Sgd.) ANGELINA D. AMBONON
Chairperson Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI-Feb 15 & 22, 2006)

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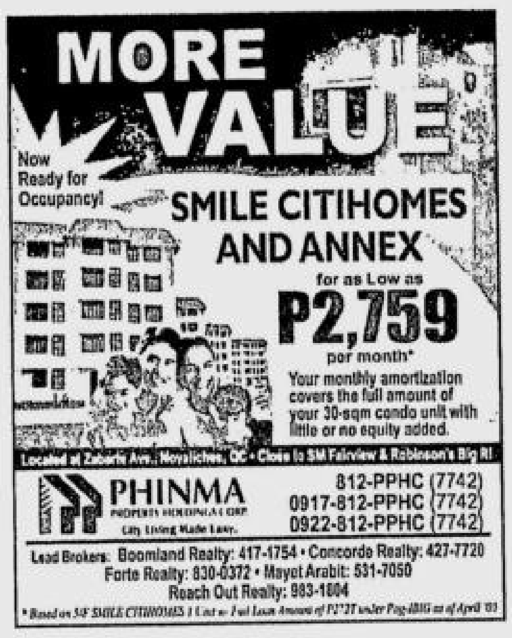

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late FELICIDAD TABERNERO who died on October 2, 1985 was extrajudicially settled in accordance with the extrajudicial settlement with waiver of rights by the heirs duly executed before Notary Public Consul General Rolando Guzman of Winnipeg, Monitoba, Canada per doc WG-463 Series 536 O.R. No.888998; Consul Raul Hernandez, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada as per Doc 068; Page 116; Book 08; Series of 2005.
(PDI-Feb. 15, 22& 28,2006)

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Notice is hereby given that CANLUBANG GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB Stock Certificate No. 1767 representing one (1) share issued in the name of FUJITSU COMPUTER PRODUCTS CORPORATION OF THE PHILS. was lost as per Affidavit of Loss dated February 20, 2006 of Notary Public Atty. Mariano Villanueva of Calamba City as per Doc. No. 166, Page No. 35 Book No. 172, Series of 2006. If no contest is received, a new certificate will be issued.
(PDI--Feb. 22, Mar 1 & 8, 2006)

More classified ads on pages B4 and B8

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NOTICE
Notice is hereby given of an Extrajudicial Settlement executed by the heirs of the deceased ELEANOR C. FLORES also known as Ma. Eleanor C. Flores over her estate before Notary Public Benigno M. Puno of Pasig City, under Doc. No. 389, Page No. 79, Book No IX, Series of 2006.
(PDI--Feb. 8, 15 & 22, 2006)

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"...absent from the body to be present with the Lord."
— 2 Corinthians 5:8

ANTONIO LERIOS TAN

Joined his Creator on February 19, 2006 at the age of 50.

His bereaved wife Alita; children Alita Monica and Jean Claude; brothers Nilo, Lito, Dante & Sonny; sisters Nancy & Zeny; nieces & nephews, relatives & friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the La Funeraria Paz, C.M. Recto, Manila.

His remains will be cremated at the Chinese Cemetery tomorrow, February 23, 2006 at 9:00 a.m.

We design obituaries for free.

People, Events & Products

Better Herbs' opportunities

BETTER HERBS INC, ONE OF the leading herbal food supplement manufacturers, is starting 2006 by offering entrepreneurs a business and partnership opportunity. The firm would like to expand its operations by making its products more available and visible throughout the country.

Better Herbs' major product, Leizenzi, has enjoyed an overwhelming acceptance, being the only alternative or herbal-based supplement for sleep disorder such as insomnia, as well as stress and anxiety related disorders.

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As part of its 2006 thrust, the company is inviting provincial distributors.

Interested parties may submit their letter of intent, company or business profile, a copy of business permit and SEC papers, supplier and bank references, and other pertinent credentials to Unit 1033, VV Soliven Building, Edsa, Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila. Areas open are Cagayan Region, Bicol Region, North Luzon, Leyte, Samar, Bohol, Mindoro, Bacolod, Iloilo, and Gen. Santos City. For inquiries, call 723 4376, 721-4376, or 0918-9349347.

Developing supervisory leadership

ATTENTION: ALL LEADERS. Don't miss this high-impact program-a distillation of important leadership principles and concepts, effective strategies, insightful ideas and inspiring stories and practical application derived from John Maxwell, Jack Welch, and other leadership gurus. It is slated on Feb. 24, 1 to 5 p.m. at RCBC, Makati. The seminar will have as its resource lecturer Jesse Rebustillo, the head of classified ads division of Philippine Daily Inquirer. He is a frequent resource speaker on supervision and leadership. This seminar is sponsored by Porter and Miles Inc, a premier training company on business, management, marketing, sales and human resource development, with office address at Suite 2502-C Tektite Tower East, Ortigas Center. Call Mercy at 638-7719/20 for more information.

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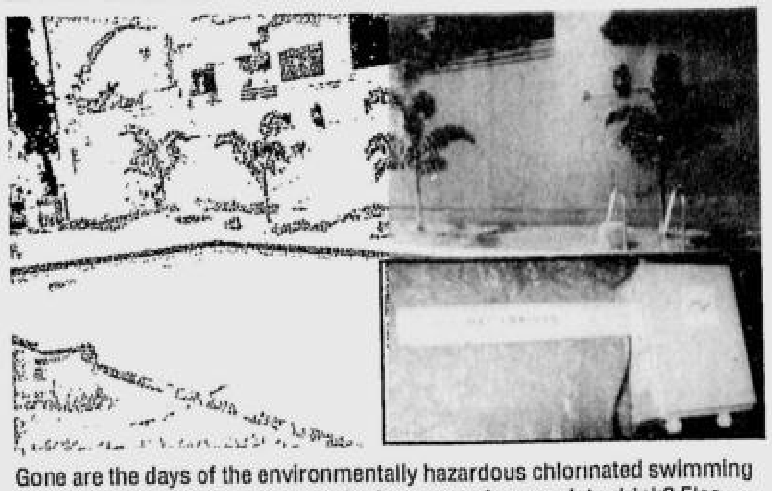

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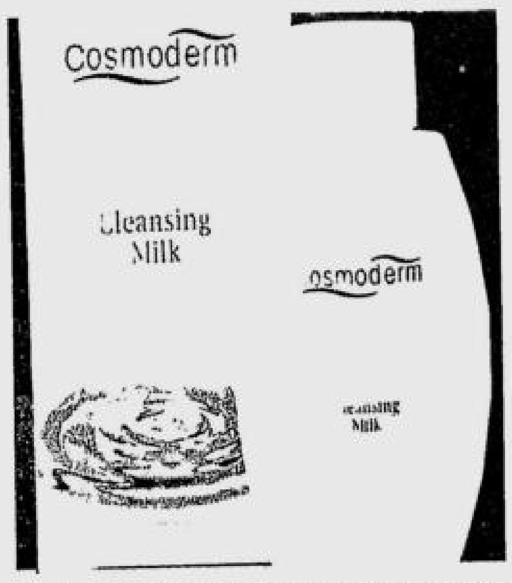

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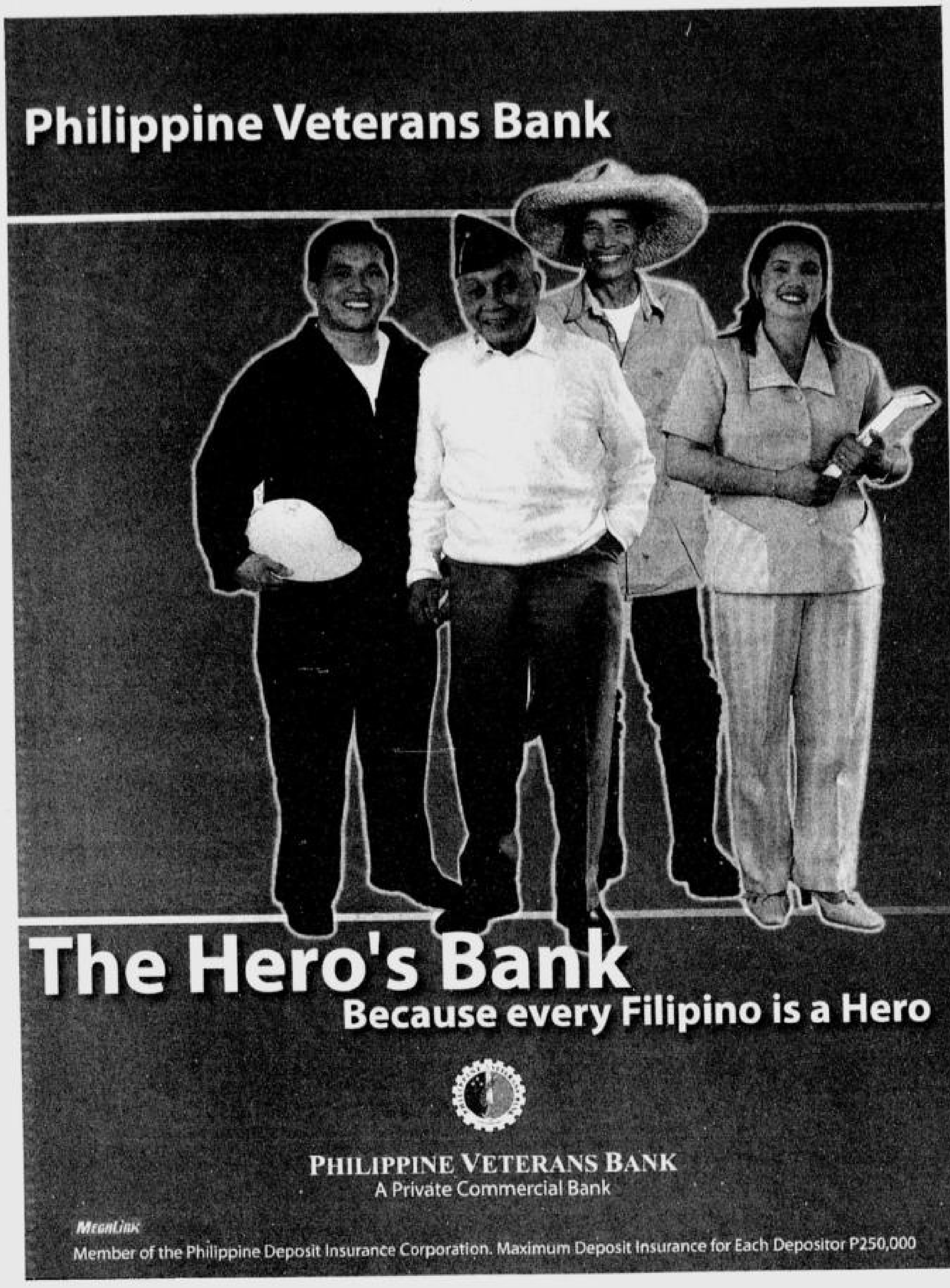
FEB. 19 TO 25 IS NATIONAL LEPROSY CONTROL Week and the Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center, Department of Dermatology, is offering free screening for family members of leprosy patients and people with initial lesions, to control the spread of this communicable disease. Visit the outpatient department of the Dermatology Department from 8 a.m. to 12 noon from Feb. 19 to 25 at the 2nd floor of the Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center, Rizal Avenue, Manila. Call Dr. Luisa Ticzon at 711-9491 local 336 or 711-6703 for details.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PhilHealth
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11 Milestones in 2005

By Leilani Mae R. Sangbaan

THE COUNTRY'S YOUNGEST SOCIAL INsurance corporation continues to break barriers and to make new conquests in the area of public service. As it marks its 11th year in the health insurance industry, the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) takes a brief look at what could very well be 11 milestones in the year just past.

For starters, PhilHealth's efforts were recognized by the national government when February 2005 was declared National Health Insurance Program Month. Then in March, PhilHealth assumed the administration of the Overseas Workers' Medicare program from the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration and dubbed it Overseas Workers Program. Finally, government health insurance programs for all sectors were integrated, allowing for better program management.

Soon after, PhilHealth made maternity care benefits and quality assurance more responsive. With the modified Normal Spontaneous Delivery Package, members can now reimburse drugs, medicines and supplies bought outside the maternity care facility if the provider's claim is less than the benefit package. New moms are also assured of a walk-through on breastfeeding practices, with partner hospitals now required to comply with provisions on Rooming-in and Breastfeeding.

A Social Weather Station survey in May revealed a 79 percent member-awareness on the program transition from Medicare to PhilHealth and an overall client-satisfaction rating of positive 57 percent, providing more room for improvement.

In June, PhilHealth solidified its partnership with such entities as the Philippine International Trading Corporation (PITC), the Philippine Association for Government Budget Administration (Pagba) and the Association of Government Accountants of the Philippines (Agap). The partnership wit PITC was to increase access of members to high-quality but low-priced medicines; and linkages with Pagba and Agap were meant to ensure the sustainability of the program through updated premium remittances and timely submission of reports.

Executive Order 452 was released, directing PhilHealth to renew the coverage of 2.5 million indigent families. This was prioritized until the year ended, with most LGUs making representations with PhilHealth for the re-enrollment of their needy constituents.

Another milestone that was etched in 2005 was when the NHIP became the only government program to receive appropriation from the most recent revenue generating measures -- the E-VAT and the Sin Tax laws.

In the area of quality assurance, PhilHealth operationalized its Benchbook for Quality Performance, a map enabling accredited health care providers to maintain the highest standards in health care delivery.

PhilHealth closed 2005 with 12.6 million active members. This translates to about 54 million beneficiaries, pushing overall coverage to about 64 percent of the 85 million estimated RP population in 2005.

On the other hand, total health insurance benefits increased by an unprecedented 14.2 percent over 2004 figures with benefit payments reaching P16 billion in 2005. Collections likewise increased by more than nine percent with total premium contributions breaching the P18 billion mark.

Work on PhilHealth's corporate re-engineering was completed. After a very comprehensive and detailed process, PhilHealth was able to complete its work on an organization that would be able to address the demands of the present and prepare for the future.

Former PhilHealth President and CEO Dr. Francisco T. Duque III became the first Secretary of Health with a health financing background while Chief Operating Officer Lorna O. Fajardo continued the daunting and challenging task of administering the NHIP towards its 11th year and beyond.

Clearly, PhilHealth is determined to give its best to the millions who have entrusted to them their health insurance needs. And on its 11th year, PhilHealth intends to take a giant leap to greater achievements, taking each step slowly but surely.

CONGRATULATIONS!!

PhilHealth
on it's
11th YEAR
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64% of RP population now covered by PhilHealth

SIXTY FOUR PERCENT OF THE COUNTRY'S population now enjoy health insurance coverage under the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth).

In a pre-11th Anniversary media briefing held recently at the Annabel's Restaurant, Lorna O. Fajardo, Officer-in-charge of the Office of the PhilHealth President and CEO said that at the close of 2005, PhilHealth registered a total active membership base of 12.5 million members, or about 54 million beneficiaries nationwide.

"This represents about 64 percent of the entire RP population of 85 million, bringing us closer to our goal of universal coverage," Fajardo said. She said that vigorous efforts at marketing the National Health Insurance Program (NHIP) to the five major sectors being served by PhilHealth, coupled by the national and local governments' support for the program, were the primary factors for this unprecedented membership record. The five sectors include the employed, the individually paying, the non-paying, the sponsored and the overseas Filipino workers.

Fajardo added that the turnover of the Medicare program for OFWs from the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) also contributed significantly to the increase in membership base. "Through our Overseas Workers Program, we were able to enlist more than 700,000 members by year-end," she said.

Of the estimated 54.5M beneficiaries, 41 percent comes from the private employed sector while about 24 percent comes from the sponsored sector. The government employed sector accounts for 15 percent while the individually paying sector accounts for 14 percent. The OFW sector accounts for 4.9 percent of the membership pie while the non-paying sector accounts for .6 percent of the entire membership distribution.

To date, PhilHealth has the biggest membership base among all other government social security agencies. It is open to self-employed individuals, to retirees and pensioners, to OFWs, as well as to indigent families whose coverage are sponsored by local government units, private companies and individuals. On the other hand, coverage is mandatory for government and private sector employees, including household employees.

PhilHealth
Your Partner in Health

Messages

Warmest felicitations to the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation on its 11th Anniversary!

Healthcare as a basic service is also a basic right. It must be delivered to all our people, especially to those who do not have the access to it, by all means. My Administration is determined to succeed in this front. Health insurance, in particular, must be enjoyed by everyone. And it has been my desire to see every Filipino proudly holding a PhilHealth card, signifying medical coverage at any time of illness, and his peace of mind.

The National Health Insurance Program has already made a mark in every Filipino's life. More than half of the entire Filipino population now enjoys PhilHealth coverage--proof of its success in increasing our people's access to high quality, reliable and available medical care services.

As you enter your 11th year of dedicated service, I call on everyone in PhilHealth to sustain the zeal by which you have served our countrymen, especially the poor and the needy. May your achievements continue to inspire you in surpassing your targets for this year and the years to come.

Mabuhay kayong lahat!

Gloria Arroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines

I convey my warmest congratulations to the men and women of the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) as they celebrate 11 years of genuine public srvice.

As your Board Chair, I have seen your unwavering efforts to overcome what seemed an insurmountable task of providing health insurance coverage for all Filipinos, especially the less fortunate. I am happy that you have all carried on the task of expanding the coverage of the National Health Insurance Program, as well as ensuring that more and more of our members are actively paying their premium contributions.

I am glad to note that benefit payments have reached P16B in 2005, an increase of about 14.2 percent from the previous year. This is a clear indicator of how stable PhilHealth is and testament to how well you have all lived up to your commitment of being a reliable partner in health. Your Anniversary theme, "Lalong Tumatatag, Laging Maaasahan" aptly captures this sentiment.

As you face the challenges of yet another year, I urge you to continue your active pursuit of the highest quality of service in everything you do. I am confident that Team PhilHealth will not waver in its commitment, especially now that the NHIP has made a difference in the lives of your members. Let us push on with our goal of servicing more and more of our people!

FRANCISCO T. DUQUE III, MD, MSc.
Secretary of Health

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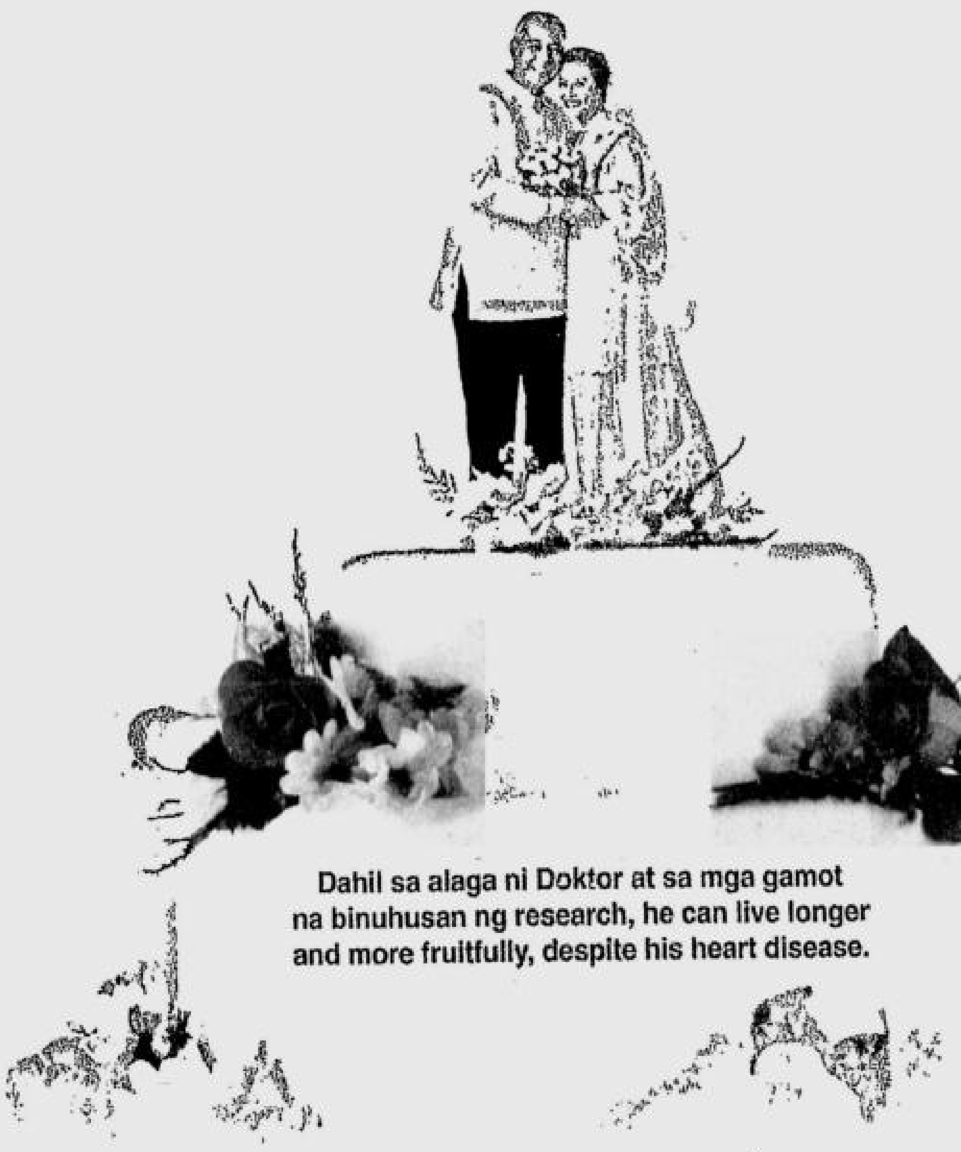

Celebrating his 50th Wedding Anniversary was just icing on the cake.

Dahil sa alaga ni Doktor at sa mga gamot na binuhusan ng research, he can live longer and more fruitfully, despite his heart disease.

For Lolo Andy, discovering he had heart disease when he was 60 made him fearful for his and his wife's future. The uncertainty darkened their blissful life. Pero salamat sa Maykapal, sa alaga ni Doktor at ng mga gamot na binuhusan ng research, Lolo Andy today lives happily and fruitfully despite his heart disease. Sulit talaga ang gamot n'ya — gamot na gawa ng Pfizer! Pfizer not only saved his heart, it also helped him and his wife reach 50 years of a love-filled life together. Definitely a milestone worth living for! Sabi nga ni Lolo Andy, dahil mahalaga ang buhay, ang gamot dapat sulit.

Dapat Sulit.
Pfizer

Gov't caps bids for 20-year bonds

Long-term T-bonds oversubscribed, volume of bids reached ₱6.3B

By Michelle V. Remo

THE 20-YEAR TREASURY BOND RATE dropped 2.2 basis points to 10.228 percent yesterday as the government rejected some of the bids, claiming to have a healthy cash position.

The long-term government security fetched 10.25 basis points during the previous auction a month ago.

The 20-year bond was oversubscribed. Volume of bids reached P6.273 billion—way over the government's programmed debt offering of P4 billion. The Bureau of the Treasury's auction committee only accepted 2.578 billion worth of tenders to keep the rate below 10.25 percent.

National Treasurer Omar Cruz said there was not much trading in the secondary market for the 20-year bond so there was no reason for the market to seek a higher rate.

Had the Treasury raised its P4-billion offering, the rate for the 20-year bond could have reached 10.306 percent, or higher than the last recorded.

Cruz said the latest rates of the 20-year bond in the secondary market hovered between 9.5 and 10.5 percent.

"On account of the very comfortable cash position of the government, I am not biting on that," Cruz said, referring to the higher rates sought by the market, during a press briefing yesterday.

Cruz said that, at present, the government is not pressured to accept high rates, unless they are reflective of the secondary market rates.

Now that the government is awash in cash, the Treasury is considering canceling the P5-year T-bond auction scheduled for Feb. 28, Cruz said. The government was supposed to borrow P4 billion through that auction.

He added that the Treasury might adjust the borrowing program for March by changing the amounts of the debt offerings through T-bills and bonds. The adjustment would depend on the result of the bond swap.

The swap now being promoted by the Treasury allows bondholders who still want to hold on to their securities to exchange their old debt instruments with tenors of 3, 5 and 7 years with freshly issued bonds. The swap would extend the government's average maturity by about one year.

The swap for the 3-year bond was held last Feb. 10, while the swap for the two other tenors will be held this Friday.

The government programmed to swap P30 billion worth of new issues of 3-year bonds, P20 billion of 5-year bonds, and P25 billion of seven-year bonds.

If the volume of existing bonds offered for swap would not reach the minimum amounts set, then the Treasury would auction off the bonds for new cash, instead of merely engaging in swap, to meet the desired volumes.

Cruz said there should be a huge volume of trading of the freshly issued 3-, 5- and 7-year bonds to make it liquid and therefore complement efforts to develop the domestic capital market.

Coffee exports rose 40% to $5.3M in '05

By Ronnel W. Domingo

COFFEE EXPORT EARNINGS WENT UP BY 40 percent to $5.3 million in 2005 from $3.8 million in 2004 as the country maintains good standing with a global industry body that administers agreements among producing and consuming countries.

According to the International Coffee Organization Certifying Agency (Icoca) of the Department of Trade and Industry, the 2005 export figure was higher than the $4-million annual target.

Icoca said that last year's record was nine times the $500,000 in export receipts posted in 2000, when the government and the coffee industry's stakeholders adopted Icoca-formulated strategies in promoting the export of processed coffee.

The country's 2005 exports were comprised mainly of soluble coffee, accounting for $5.2 million or 98 percent of the total freight-on-board value, while green beans and roasted coffee accounted for the rest.

Icoca said Philippine-produced coffee maintained a loyal group of importers owing to the country's good standing as a member of the International Coffee Organization, which administers a United Nations-recognized multilateral agreement among 75 countries.

About 92 percent, or 35,040 kilograms, of the raw coffee beans shipped out went to Oman, while Japan and China cornered 8 percent at a combined 3,070 kg.

As for soluble coffee, 1.4 metric tons or 73 percent went to Japan; 172.4 MT or 9 percent went to Greece; 126 MT or 6 percent went to Cyprus; 70 MT or 4 percent to Spain; and the rest were spread out to Thailand, Turkey, Fiji, Indonesia, Italy, Korea, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Kuwait, Papua New Guinea, Palau, Singapore, United Arab Emirates, and the United States.

Also, Icoca accredited seven new coffee exporters last year under its special export authorization. The exporters accounted for some $235,000 worth of coffee exports in 2005.

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PLDT SVP Eric Alberto (5th from right, 2nd row), PLDT FVP Cesar Enriquez (3rd from right, 3rd row) & PLDT FVP [illegible] (front, 4th from left) together with the C-Level Organization members and PLDT CBG executives

PLDT Chairman Manuel V. Pangilinan

Chief to Chiefs

PLDT Mounts a "Really Cool" Showcase

"It was one of the greatest tours we have ever been on, really cool" said Abhishek Jain, "as a matter of fact it was the best tour we've ever been on." The much-traveled IT professional was clearly as effusive as he was honest. PLDT Innolab's tour for C-Level Executives (CFO's, CIO's, CEO's) was an eye-opener for these world hopping warriors scouting the globe for countries and companies to do business with.

As the ICT and BPO industries have registered continuous 100 percent annual increases in this country, the Philippines is looking to be the destination of choice for international investors. "We will be managing for this rate of growth that we see to continue for the next two years," said PLDT SVP for the Corporate Business Solutions Group Eric Alberto. "PLDT Innolab showcases various business solutions and at the same time partners with academe and the government"

For this evening he drove home the key advantages that the Philippines and PLDT possesses that are increasingly attractive to investors. "The four competitive ingredients we have are our high cost competitiveness through high quality human capital; a robust, diversified telco infrastructure; a globally competitive real estate market; and peace and order in a politically stable situation."

PLDT Chairman Manuel V. Pangilinan reiterated the company's assurance to maintain this positive investor climate. "We have three levels of commitment, to invest in infrastructure, migrating PLDT's legacy into IP based services; to our people who are acquiring more depth in IT skills; and to innovation. We must innovate to survive."

At the end of the evening, Jain also said, "this tour has exceeded our expectations. Everything- the storyboarding of the tours, the whole Hollywood feel, is something we want to import for our own presentations." It was evidently a sentiment shared by his impressed entourage.

C-Level Chairman Abhishek Jain gets a tour of a PLDT-enabled "Virtual Resort"

Corporate Business Group SVP Eric R. Alberto

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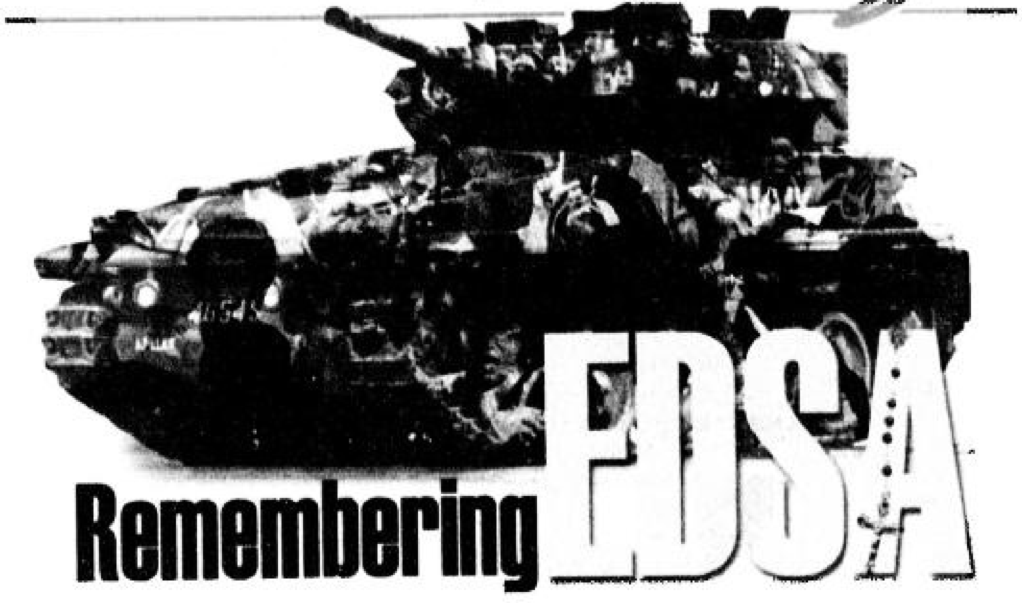


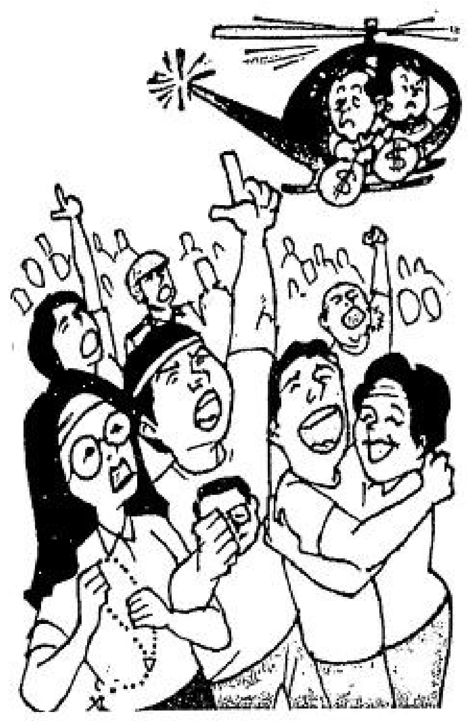
We may have been kids then, but the Edsa Revolution made an impact on our lives, too.

In this special section, 2bU! remembers Edsa—what it was then and what it means to us now

Celebrating true people power

How many of us see this holiday for what it really is?

By Angela V. Ignacio
2bU! Correspondent



THE FIRST EDSA REVOLUTION constitutes one of the earliest memories I have as a kid. I remember creeping downstairs into the basement and seeing my aunt and her college friends making giant yellow papier-mâché hands and other paraphernalia.

I was barely 3 years old, but I felt there was something important going on, so I eagerly tried to help out in any way I could. Little did I know that history was about to happen, and I was fast becoming a part of it.

Fifteen years later, the same thing happened. Another tyrant, another uprising, another Edsa gathering. By then, I was old enough to understand, but I felt that this one was different, and it wasn't necessarily good.

Kids went there to see and be seen, hoping to spot some celebrity or bump into their crushes. Supporters were goaded not by a sense of nationalism, but by monetary promises. Celebrities publicly announced their support for this or that politician to boost their popularity status (or worse, to become politicians themselves).

It was a golden opportunity for advertising hawks and media vultures who were ready to pounce and prey on anyone and anything

CELEBRATING/ C2

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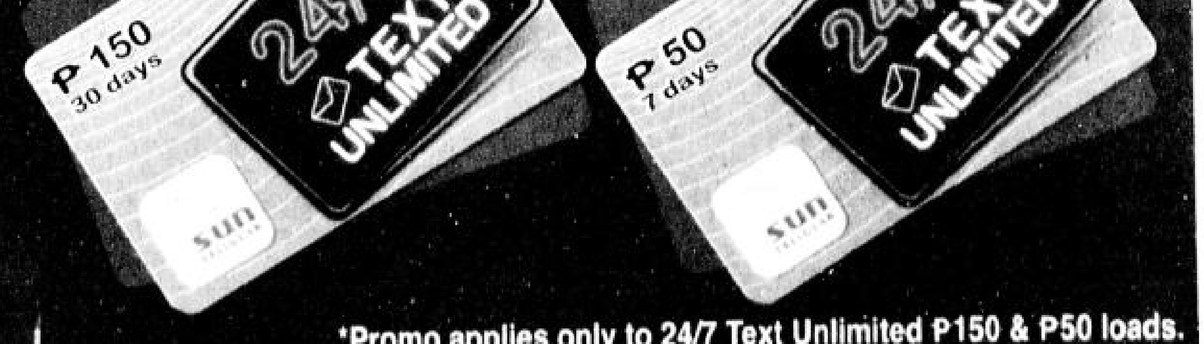

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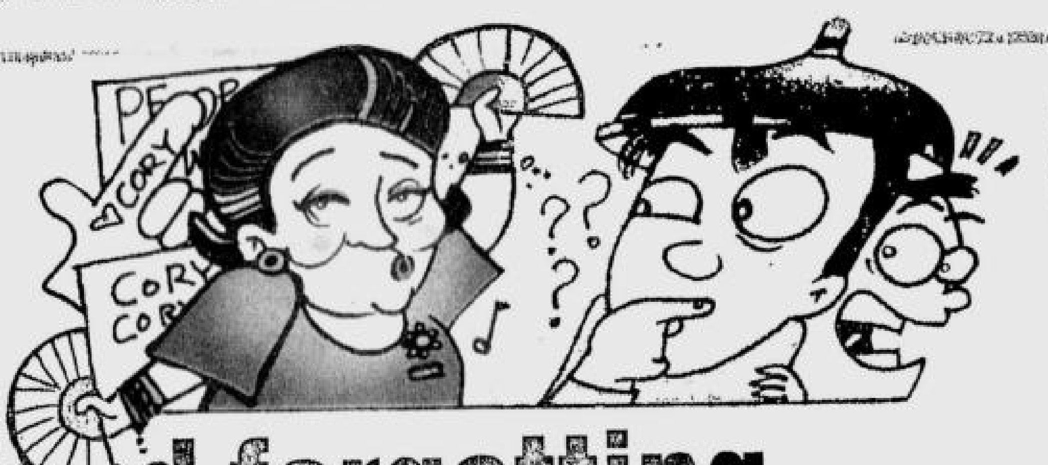
'In this world, everything is pardoned in advance and therefore everything is cynically permitted.'
—Milan Kundera



Memory and forgetting

Danicar Mariano
Contributor

MILAN KUNDERA'S novel "The Unbearable Lightness of Being" tackles Nietzche's idea of eternal return: "Everything recurs as we once experienced, and that a life, which disappears once and for all, which does not return, is like a shadow, without weight, dead in advance and whether it was horrible, beautiful or sublime, its horror, beauty and sublimity mean nothing, altering nothing in the destiny of the world."

The idea of eternal return, according to Kundera, implies a perspective from which things appear other than we know them: they appear without the mitigating circumstance of their transitory nature. "This mitigating circumstance is what prevents us from coming to a verdict. For how can we condemn something that is ephemeral, in transit? In the sunset of dissolution, everything is illuminated by the aura of nostalgia."

In the neglected People Power revolution of 1986, we find proof of these sayings. This monumental event, precisely because of its historical value, has been so implanted in our consciousness that it rekindles a lost patriotism.

I never knew about Marcos. I was too young to comprehend what was happening when it was happening. My understanding came later. So I perceived the many injustices committed by him against the Filipinos not as tremendous monstrosity, but as something that was meant, if only for the revolution to be possible.

Many critics say we Filipinos forget too easily. Just a couple of years later, the Marcoses had returned. Perhaps we have forgiven them. If time is a circle, then cynically, the future pardons everything that has ever happened in the past because its existence owes itself to it, however dark it may be. If we have not had a tyrannical dictator, we would not have had People Power.

Since history will always be recorded, however neglected it may be, it will always be relived. Under this process, it will gain a multitude of meanings and interpretations. It will become heavy with associations and scrutiny. Ages will come to wonder: "how could my life have changed if this never happened?" and despite how much they may theorize or complain, they will owe their existence to it, because, having only one life to lead, there is no reality save that very one which has created them.

"We see things the way they are because if they were different, we would not be here to see it otherwise," the science of quantum physics says.

History in action

History is constantly and ultimately reinvented by each action of every human being. This tells us that if we have a government we despise, it is only because we have fostered it, just as if we exist in a world we hate, it is only because we have succumbed to it .

To forget history means to have no history at all. Without history, life has no pattern and context, and it is removed from being part of any "greater scheme." It is a life that cannot recur, dead in advance, meaning nothing and altering nothing.

Is this, then, why we constantly end up in the same tragedies? Years after the massive struggle of People Power I, the Marcoses and his cronies have recovered. Years after the passion that inflamed People Power II, Loi Ejercito is senator and Erap is threatening to be released. The Ozone tragedy, the Ultra tragedy, and all the other tragedies we could have avoided with a little foresight—all stem from a lack of hindsight, a lack of insight into what needs to be done as counseled by the wisdom of the past.

Take, for example, the recent Leyte landslide—how many times within just this decade, has trash or the earth swallowed our countrymen alive? What an appropriate metaphor for our collective memory. We remember for a while, and then cover up the trauma—eventually leading to an avalanche. That is why life in this country isn't one tragedy after another.

Some say our forgetfulness is the source of our happiness. We are one of the top 10 happiest countries in the world despite widespread poverty, a survey says. Some say our forgetfulness can be the source of our forgiveness. It's gotten so that we allow the guilty, who we shouldn't even be allowing to roam freely, off the hook. More than that, however, our forgetfulness can be the source of our martyr-like tolerance for living under the same bad conditions over and over again when what we desperately need is change.

Our forgetfulness is obviously not serving us anymore. True forgiveness and retribution comes from remembering, from reliving. True happiness comes from knowing the past is in its rightful place. The past isn't something we overcome, but something we build on, something we, at the very least, learn from—the ashes of our failure, rising up to the phoenix of whatever remaining hope we can muster. We mustn't allow ourselves the luxury of forgetting.

Celebrating

From page C1

worth sensationalizing. Compared with the first, this was more like a colossal street party gone wrong. At least, that's how it seemed to me, because I was actually there.

And the third Edsa? Some people even think there really was no third, that it was just an (un)organized mob disturbance rather than a bona fide rally. But try telling that to the masses.

Reasons

Yes, there were people who were there for the right reasons. But there were also those who were there for the wrong ones. And yes, we got what we wanted—a corrupt leader overthrown and a supposedly better one elected to take his place.

But something was definitely missing. There was virtually no spirit, no conviction, no unity. Power to the masses became a power struggle between the classes. The nation was split into half instead of becoming whole, a cacophony of halfhearted cries instead of one solid voice.

Ultimately, what were we left with? Nothing but a hollow victory and tons of garbage, both on the streets and in the government.

With our country not having become better, it's only a matter of time before an Edsa Quatro starts. But how many more street rallies must we endure before the whole vicious cycle of unrest ends?

As the famous cry said, "*Tama na, sobra na.*" Edsa, Edsa Dos, Edsa Tres... No matter how many Edsa rallies we mount, only one truly has the right to be given the distinction.

The People Power Revolution of 1986 was, hands down, a true triumph of democracy. The whole world watched in awe as the poor stopped groveling on their knees and stood up, while the rich stopped looking down their noses and learned to see eye to eye with everyone else. It was all about unity and equality. One goal, one voice. But just how many of us see this holiday for what it really is?

Optimism

I confess that I am not the most loyal citizen. I have my own preoccupations to deal with, and God knows how often I have complained about the present and grieved for the future of this country.

But what I lack in patriotism, I make up for through optimism, even blind idealism at times. How do we achieve the unity we've glimpsed in the Edsa revolution? Educate the masses. Reeducate the educated. Quit trying to overthrow the president and focus on finding a better one. Stop being apathetic and start caring.

Of course, that's easier said than done, but I believe that if you can't do it yourself, then at least say it, so that others in a better position can hear it and do something about it.

Then again, it's not the fight that's important. It's what we're actually fighting for. Despite the political unrest and looming threats of mutiny, I know that deep down, all we want is peace.

So today, it won't be about rewriting history, but about celebrating it. Today, the "L" sign will stand not for "loser," but for "*laban*," just as it did years ago.

Today, we will quit whining and start taking action. Today, we will forget how deep we've fallen and start believing again that we can still pick up the pieces.

Today, we will remember Edsa. And be proud of who we are once again.

E-mail the author at aoshi_no_miko@atenista.net

Comics Revolutions

A dispatch from Wondercon, the mecca of comics lovers in San Francisco

Text and photos by Ces Cabangon

AUTHOR having a blast with Grant Morrison, the genius behind "Arkham Asylum" and "The Invisibles."

J.J. ABRAMS

KEVIN Smith

WONDERCON IS THE MECCA for every avid comic collector. The first major comic convention of the year, it was held in San Francisco on Feb. 10-12. In celebration of its 20th year, Wondercon's lineup was composed of the biggest names in comics, from major to independent publishers.

One may ask what the big deal was. Comics happen to be a part of popular culture the world over, its narratives and images are a powerful expression of cultural soul. Revolutions do not always need guns and bombs. Sometimes, a pocket full of dreams, a pen, a fiery imagination, and a one-man army is enough to shake the world off its tilt.

Wondercon's fun-filled three-day event offered comic-book signings, panel discussions, animé screenings, gaming, exhibits, charity auctions and fan films. Attendees came dressed as their favorite characters from science fiction and fantasy. The main hall was filled with booths selling rare comics from the Golden Age down to the present, as well as shirts, trading cards, toys and other collectibles—the perfect bazaar that comics addicts dream of.

Talks were held in various rooms of the Moscone West Center, coinciding with other events. Speakers ranged from Sergio Aragones, the world's fastest cartoonist, to the controversial legend, Frank Miller. Speakers and audience members had opportunities to interact through Q&A portions held after each speech. Here are a few highlights from the panels I am delighted to have caught:

- **"Mission Impossible 3" director J.J. Abrams**

The moment J.J. Abrams' name was announced and he appeared on stage, the crowd erupted in applause and cheer. Abrams is best known for leading the creative force behind television's most exciting and memorable shows: "Felicity," "Alias" and "Lost." He has since made a jump from directing for television to film, specifically, the highly anticipated "MI:3." It is Hollywood news that Tom Cruise postponed "MI:3" for a year while Abrams completed his contract with "Lost."

Abrams was so full of energy, he had the audience worked up and clinging to his every word. He clearly had a blast sharing his directing experiences. He made mention of his first meeting with Tom Cruise, where he asked Cruise himself: "Isn't it just weird being Tom Cruise?" This had the audience laughing and he reasonably declared that Tom Cruise belongs in a world out there, not in his. Abrams expressed that it was great working [illegible] easily shifting from performing his own stunts to acting in a particularly emotional scene.

During the Q&A, Abrams was reminded of how "Felicity's" short hair contributed to the decline of the show's ratings. He was surprised how "Felicity" was brought up after all this time, but he took the comment with good nature and jest. Meanwhile, a woman from the audience observed how Abrams' work in "Felicity" led to where he is now. She began to describe an episode where a man was run over by a bus, when Abrams delightfully interrupted her. With a big smile on his face, Abrams told her that such was the first episode of "Felicity" he ever directed and that he loved her for having brought it up. Abrams then explained that he had always played with the idea that had Felicity become a spy, she'd turn out to be "Alias'" Sydney Bristow.

FRANK Miller signing graphic novels at the Dark Horse booth

Needless to say, working with Keri Russell (who played Felicity) in "MI:3" made him feel that he had come full circle. Though Abrams would have loved to direct the last episode of "Alias," he couldn't do so as he had to go on tour for "MI:3."

The last question Abrams entertained from the audience came from a young man who told him that he and his friends had serious arguments with a particular question related to "Lost"—"Is the island Jesus Christ?" To this, Abrams gave an amused look and replied "Yes," which again led to everyone in the room to burst in fits of laughter.

- **Writer and director Kevin Smith**

Crowd favorite Kevin Smith was greeted with roars and a standing ovation from the audience. Humorously enough, he was wearing a shirt with the huge words "sellout" printed at the back.

Smith is popular for directing the Jersey series: "Clerks," "Mallrats," "Chasing Amy" and "Jersey Girl." He has also written comics based on his movie characters such as "Chasing Dogma" and Marvel superheroes such as "Daredevil" and "Spider-Man."

Smith was on a roll with his monologues and had the audience howling with laughter as he poked fun at himself and spoke his mind. He started with unmentionable jokes relating to the "X-Men" and the catastrophe that was "Jersey Girl."

He entertained his fans with the lashing he received for casting Jennifer Lopez, who is commented not to have died soon enough in the film. He then hinted that "Jersey Girl" "could have been cut to a 15-minute film and still we would've been lacerated." Due to the turnout of "Jersey Girl," Smith no longer wishes to work with anyone famous, as an actor's personal life could shower his film with preconceived notions.

If you are wondering about Smith's "Green Hornet" project, it doesn't look like it will see the light of day. Though Smith wrote the script, he declined to direct the film adaptation. He explained that because only a certain age bracket is familiar with Green Hornet, he had to walk away from the pressure and difficulty to make the movie a huge hit.

Smith treated the audience with a clip from his upcoming film, "Clerks 2" or "The Passion of the Clerks." The scene was a hilarious debate between fans of "Star Wars" and "Lord of the Rings" on which was a better trilogy.

While "Chasing Amy" is a personal favorite of his, "Clerks 2" made him realize how much "Clerks 1" and its sequel mean to him. "Clerks 1," after all, is a film that mirrored Smith in his 20s. "Clerks 2," on the other hand, follows the growth of the characters from the first film, which we can assume mirrors a more mature Smith.

Smith said that, indeed, "Clerks 2" allowed him to surpass his directing experience with "Chasing Amy."

During the Q&A with Smith, a guy had the gall to go up and ask Smith to take a look at a screenplay he wrote. This only earned the ire of the crowd who jeered and booed him away. After all, the journey to success can't be achieved with shortcuts. When asked for his best advice for aspiring writers, Smith replied, "Write what you know."

- **"Superman Returns" director Bryan Singer and actor Brandon Routh**

Bryan Singer is one of Hollywood's hottest directors to date. He was one of the creative minds behind "The Usual Suspects," and is best known for directing "X-Men" and "X-Men 2."

Bryan Singer was not as engaging a public speaker as J.J. Abrams or Kevin Smith, but he managed to maintain the crowd's attention as everyone present shared a common interest: Superman.

Upon getting hold of the microphone, Singer immediately jumped to the Q&A, and later introduced Brandon Routh—the new Man of Steel .

Both sportingly answered questions ranging from Superman's codpiece to why the S in Superman looks smaller compared with the old design.

For the curious, Routh explained that the minimized S maximized the illusion of his chest, adding a sense of strength to his suit. Had the old large S been used, it would have taken over his chest and Routh would have looked smaller .

Singer openly discussed how directing "Superman Returns" was much more daunting than "X-Men." The shoot in Australia was the farthest he's had to go for work. Singer also spoke of how the role of Superman is bigger collectively than the actor. Thus, it was an advantage that they did not have a famous actor portray him, and deal with the baggage he could have carried into the film.

Looking back, Christopher Reeves was a relatively unknown actor when he signed up for Superman, just like Routh.

Singer said that "Superman Returns" merges with "Superman 2" and "Superman 3." We see a different Superman as the world has moved on without him. Among the conflicts Superman has to cope with is his inability to veer away from his attraction for Lois Lane, even if she now has a child and fiancé. We can also expect a much darker and villainous Lex Luther depicted by Kevin Spacey.

When asked by a fan which Superman movie or scene is their respective favorite, Routh replied that he thinks fondly of "Superman 2." Notably, the scenes when Clark Kent/Superman is with Lois in Niagara Falls having hotdogs and then having to come to her rescue. "Superman 2" is also Singer's favorite, but more for its memorable villains—particularly, Ursa and General Zod.

- **Writer and director Frank Miller**

Frank Miller is a star in the world of comics. He reinvented the superhero, along with the likes of Alan Moore, breathing new life into the comics scene in the 1980s.

Miller is credited with redefining Batman comics in his groundbreaking epic, "The Dark Knight Returns." He has also worked on Marvel characters such as Daredevil and Elektra.

"STAR Wars'" General Grievous

In the 1990s, he left DC and spent much of the decade writing and drawing the many story arcs that make up "Sin City."

When Miller was introduced, the audience was held in a spell of awe and fell into a quiet hush of reverence. Everyone was in his grip and was intensely listening as a panelist interviewed him about his influences and works.

Miller's early writing for "Daredevil" was brought up as it is considered by critics as his most romantic work. Miller disagrees though, as he believes "Sin City's" "That Yellow B*st*rd" is his most romantic work. It revolves around generation-crossed lovers John Hartigan and Nancy Callahan. Theirs is a pure love John refuses to consummate and he ultimately sacrifices his life for her.

Miller has always maintained strong political views and he was able to convey this in "Dark Knight Returns," which he wrote during the Regan presidency. He wanted to focus on the media as TV just gives viewers the surface of things. Tackling serious political and social issues in comics earned him great acclaim. Miller wanted to write more parodies under the Regan administration, but was prevented from doing so.

Miller's next project is called "Holy Terror Batman," in which Gotham City is attacked by terrorists.

Miller is clearly fond of comparing Batman with Superman. He says: "Superman stood as an icon, but an icon of what? Who is Superman? It's worth a look." He goes on to say that "Batman is a man in love with a city, it makes sense for him to protect Gotham." To this, it was raised why Batman was such a difficult character. Miller pauses and counters, "Because he is the smartest superhero on earth and he can't fly."

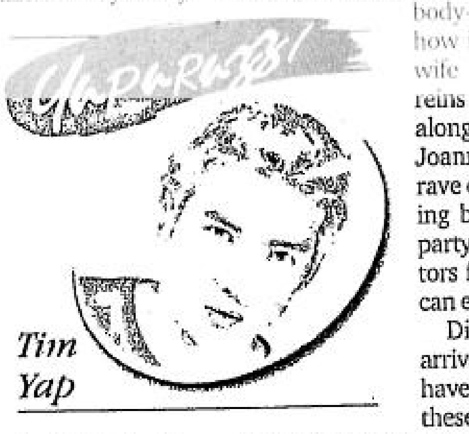
Miller was asked what he would like the next generation of his profession to achieve. To this, Miller took a long pause and replied: "Better comics."

War of the raves

DJ Tiesto and Hed Kandy are slugging it out in Manila this March. Bling it on!

THIS NEWS MIGHT BE TOO EARLY for the scene's partyphiliacs, but I think we all deserve to know. Mark the date March 31, because it's the date when all partyphiles would rejoice and be rejuvenated by the growth of the scene.

On March 31, two of international house music's giants will meet and match. **DJ Tiesto**, considered to be the No. 1 DJ in the world, is coming to our shores. And he is not alone on the party circuit quest for dominance. Party-hardy favorite **Hed Kandy** is also coming back to woo Manila's all-too-fickle party crowd. Beat that.



Tim Yap

Inasmuch as I love our nightlife (which I think can compete with the rest of the world), it is only now that two major world leaders in the party-music worlds are going head-to-head in Manila. It all started when **Stephen Ku**, a promoter who has been making waves for quite some time now, got the prized booking for DJ Tiesto. For many years now, everyone in the circuit has been trying to get a hold of him (think international city bidding to host the Olympics type of war), and it is only now that Manila is getting the chance to do so. The party is going to happen inside the cavernous halls of the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC).

Big Fish, on the other hand, led by **Domini Primero** and the late **Tuck Cheah's** widow **Pixie Cheah** and Big Fish First Lady **Joanne Primero**, decided to mount a head-on collision of the Tiesto event with its own Hed Kandy gig, to be held at another giant party venue, the World Trade Center. They even plan to give out countless CDs to lure the revelers.

Of late, the Big Fish crew has had a monopoly of the big rave market, with heavy support from scene stalwarts such as Smart's Addict Mobile and Motorola (which hosted and sponsored last month's massive **Paul Van Dyk** event, photos on this page). Now, Stephen Ku's group poses a stiff challenge, with the world's foremost spinmeister carrying the top billing on the DJ marquee.

Tuck it in

To Big Fish's credit (with Tuck Cheah's musical supervision), though, it has always championed the cause of new DJs and the quality of music. Before DJ Tuck's passing the other year, he had been very vocal about his vision of what the perfect party experience should be. (That includes partyphiles actually paying for the cover charge to get in the club—and not "everybody-feeling-VIP" status, like how it is in our shores.) His wife Pixie now takes the reins in booking the DJs, along with Domini and Joanne, to make sure every rave event is filled with nothing but the best the Manila partyphile (and other visitors from within the region) can enjoy.

Did you know that tourist arrivals in the Philippines have increased because of these parties? Party peeps from all over the world are fully aware of these shindigs and would gladly hop on a plane to catch their favorite music meister, the same way you would fly to Hong Kong to catch **Kylie** or Singapore to watch the American Idols live in concert. These are party pesos flowing into our economy.

In the end, who is the real winner? Us! Because with these party promotional groups jockeying to gain prominence in the field, they only make themselves better, and, by doing so, they also make our party lives livelier and more progressive than it is. I just wish they both really have us in mind when they throw these gigs and not let pride or whatever negative interest get in the way. I know how hard it is to mount these happenings, and I sincerely hope they fill up both venues. It's no joke to pack these spaces.

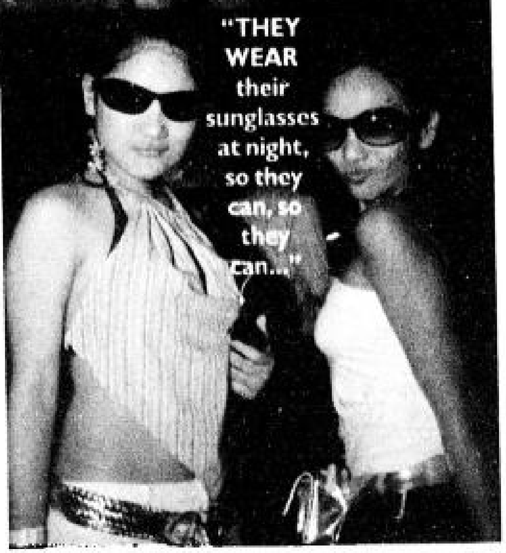
So my advice is, let's give both sides all the support we can give. In the end, we will all be the victors in this party battle.

Win, win, win! That should always be our motto.

MTV SHU. Anne Matoto and Tessa Dragon

LIKES IT. JM Rodriguez and Tina Tinio

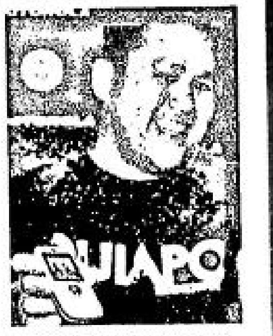
GOTTA HAVE. You go, Faith Amigo!

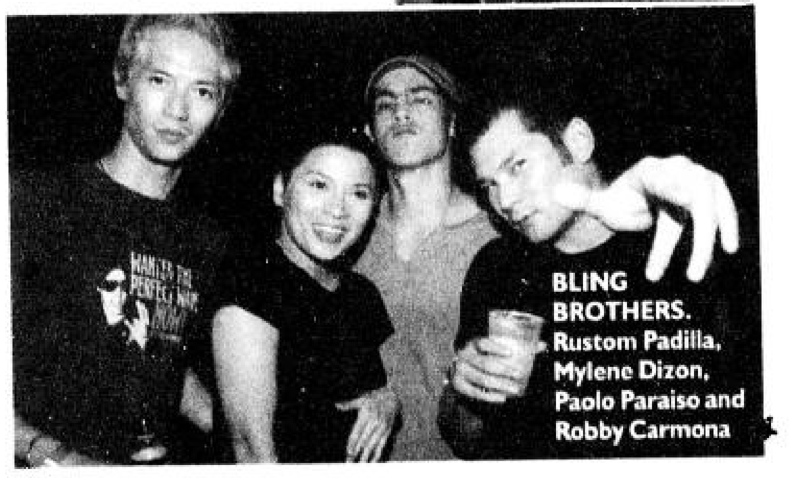

"THEY WEAR their sunglasses at night, so they can, so they can..."

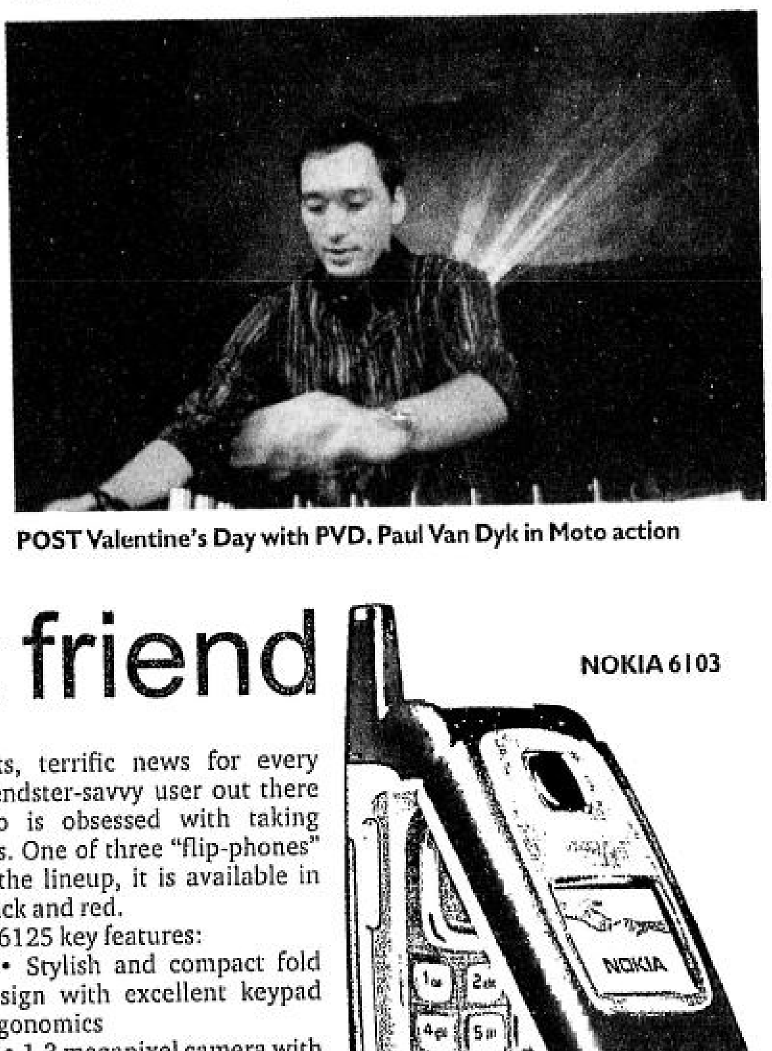
PREVIEW MOTO. Mari Litonjua and Pauline Juan

DUTCH TREAT. Rachel Lobangco with CJ Bekeling

MOTO MANUAL. RJ Ledesma's room


HOUSE OF LAUREL. Rajo in Moto mode


BLING BROTHERS. Rustom Padilla, Mylene Dizon, Paolo Paraiso and Robby Carmona


POST Valentine's Day with PVD. Paul Van Dyk in Moto action

HATTAH, hottah! More parties, please!

Meet your new best friend

By Gabriel H. Mercado
2bU! Contributor

Nokia's new 6 series phones command attention for their form-and-function savvy

NOKIA LAUNCHED ITS LATEST 6 series phones, and I'm convinced one of these phones is very likely going to be your next one.

To qualify, you'd have to think of phones as tools rather than playthings. Maybe you're a graduating student getting a new job, earning a new post at work, or otherwise experiencing something new in your life. Or maybe you like to have a phone with the latest innovation, but without being overwhelmingly "techie." In other words, you're pretty much like the rest of us.

Around April this year, Nokia will release the new 6 series phones worldwide. Nokia is looking to grow its "mid-tier" or middle-class market, by adopting a "replacement" rather than "new phone" approach, offering consumers an upgrade on what they have rather than a whole new phone altogether.

The new 6 series phones are designed for people who like to have the latest phone features but don't want to lose the familiarity of previous models.

The new series is also for the guy or girl who gets frustrated with "super hi-tech" phones, but is equally uncomfortable with too-simple models.

Nokia hopes the 6 series has the right mix of form-and-function savvy.

6070 Key Features:

- FM Stereo Radio
- VGA Camera with video recorder
- MMS
- Nokia Xpress Audio messaging
- Push to talk
- mp3 ringtones

Matt Rothschild, head of product marketing, Business Line Management for Nokia, describes the 6070 as a phone "for people who own a phone without a camera, and are looking to move up." The 6070 is a simple Series 40, four-band phone with GPRS, EDGE and HS (CSD) connectivity in a fairly sturdy looking package in dark gray or light blue.

6103 Key Features:

- Bluetooth Wireless Technology
- FM Radio
- VGA Camera and self-portrait possibility
- Nokia Xpress Audio messaging
- Push to talk

An update on 6101, this one has bluetooth. The front-side camera lens allows self-portraits, terrific news for every Friendster-savvy user out there who is obsessed with taking pics. One of three "flip-phones" in the lineup, it is available in black and red.

6125 key features:

- Stylish and compact fold design with excellent keypad ergonomics
- 1.3 megapixel camera with 8x digital zoom
- Wireless connectivity with bluetooth
- Music player (mp3, mp4, m4a, wma)

One of the 6125's claims to fame is its storage capability via a micro-SD card, that allows up to a whopping 2 GB. This, plus a 1280x1024 camera and a multi-format music player, makes it a viable upgrade for mobile video or audio fans. You can use bluetooth, infrared, USB—and attach files to e-mail.

6131 key features:

- Stylish and compact fold design with push-to-open functionality and excellent keypad ergonomics
- 2.2 true-color display with 16.7 million colors
- 1.3 megapixel camera with 8x digital zoom
- Wireless connectivity with bluetooth
- Music player (mp3, mp4, m4a, wma)

The 6131's main feature is its push-to-open function, which makes opening the flip phone with one hand possible. It has big ergonomic keypads. Other 6131 features are almost similar to other models', with a good 1280x1024 cam, bluetooth and a radio and mp3 player.

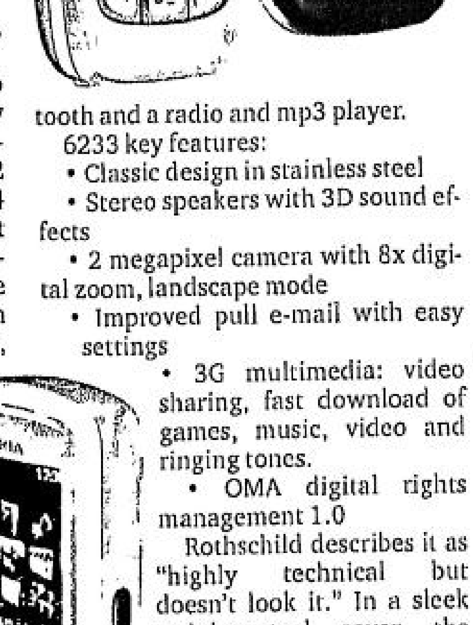
6233 key features:

- Classic design in stainless steel
- Stereo speakers with 3D sound effects
- 2 megapixel camera with 8x digital zoom, landscape mode
- Improved pull e-mail with easy settings
- 3G multimedia: video sharing, fast download of games, music, video and ringing tones.
- OMA digital rights management 1.0

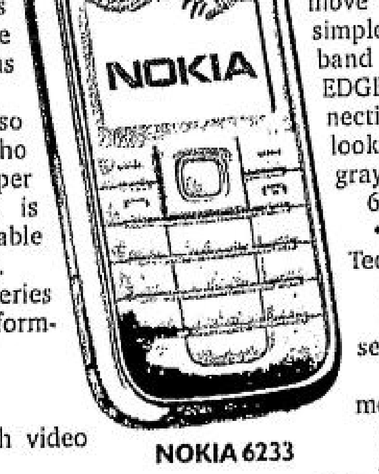
Rothschild describes it as "highly technical but doesn't look it." In a sleek stainless-steel cover, the 6233 offers a 2 megapixel, 8x digital zoom camera, 3G connectivity, and OMA digital rights management in anticipation of content coming in via 3G.

The 6233 offers 1600x1200 pixel camera shots which you then share via WCDMA or Edge, store in an SD card and send via e-mail. The phone comes in classic black or silver alloy.

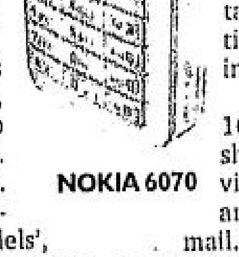
NOKIA 6125



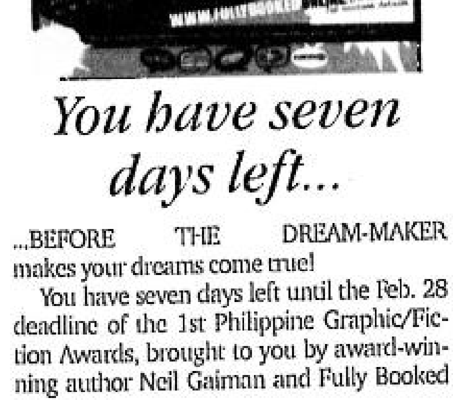
NOKIA 6103



NOKIA 6233



NOKIA 6070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You have seven days left until the Feb. 28 deadline of the 1st Philippine Graphic/Fiction Awards, brought to you by award-winning author Neil Gaiman and Fully Booked bookshop.

This contest is open to all Filipinos, as part of Gaiman's special thanks to all Filipinos for the unforgettable welcome he got during his very successful book-signing here last year.

Submit your original entries for either the prose or the comics categories. Just think, with your wild imagination, paper and pen, you can be P100,000 richer!

All winning entries and honorable mentions will be published in a special compilation, with a foreword by Neil Gaiman himself.

This contest is proudly brought to you by the Philippine Daily Inquirer's 2bU! and Super!, as well as Meg magazine, NU 107 and Hero TV. For contest rules and downloadable application form, visit www.fullybookedonline.com or e-mail writingcontest@fullybookedonline.com. Good luck and keep those creative juices flowing!

We have winners!

THE THREE WINNERS OF THE 2bU! Plays Cupid promo are:

- Annalisa Margarita Mariano of Quezon City
- Cheryl Polican of Philippine Airlines
- Dionne Morales of Foreign Service Institute

These lucky winners will bring home gift certificates from Animaland, SM, Cheesecake Etc., Max Brenner, Häagen-Dazs, Shakey's, Bollywood/Café Havana, Dencio's, Solomon Guest House, Sakae Sushi, Metro Phi Bar, Tia Maria's, California Nails and Day Spa, tickets to Enchanted Kingdom, Casio watches from Time Depot, a dress from Karimadon, Limited Edition 2006 His and Hers Havaianas, perfumes from Ralph Lauren and Cacharel, makeup and skincare products from Shu Uemura, goodie bags from Unilever and six-month subscriptions to PLDT's myDSL. They will also get to enjoy the poolside barbecue at the Hotel Philippine Plaza.

The winner of our iPod Shuffle promo is:

- Kim Yan

Their entries will be published in next week's 2bU! Winners will be notified on how they can claim their prizes.

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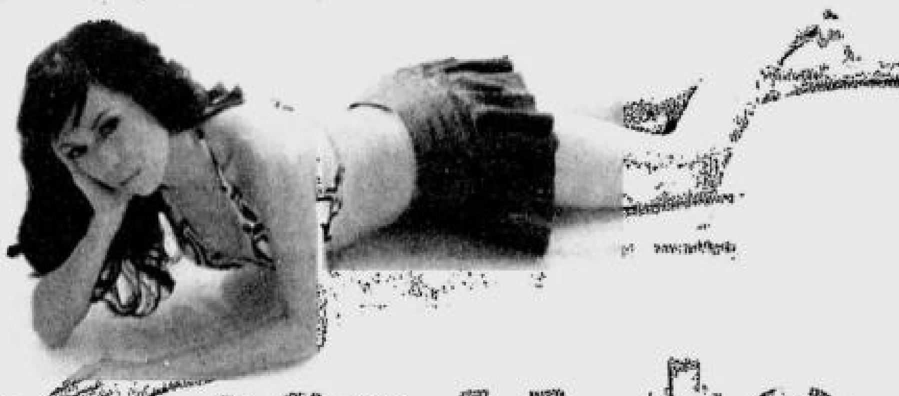

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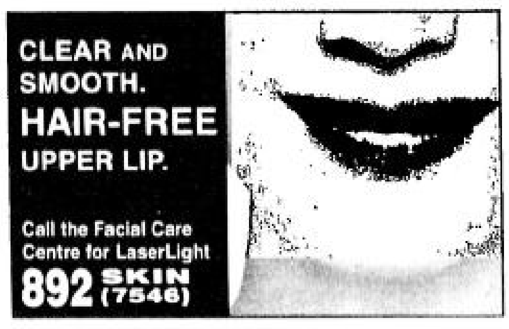
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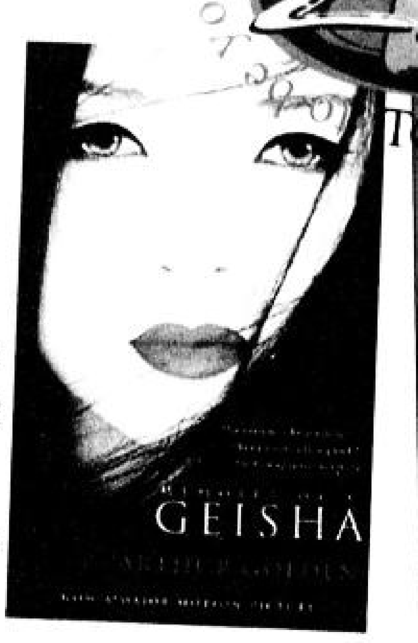
Geisha fever

After a long wait, the film adaptation of Arthur Golden's celebrated novel "Memoirs of a Geisha" will finally hit local theaters today.
2bU! celebrates this colorful film with a special issue featuring your very own geisha reading list, exquisite kimonos and a hot Japanese resto that's sure to please your palate.

Your geisha reading list

If the movie has left you intrigued about the geisha lifestyle, pick up these books and start reading



By Pam Pastor

THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE FILM version of "Memoirs of a Geisha" will spawn renewed interest in the geisha culture. Many books have been written about the subject—both fiction and non-fiction—but sadly, not a lot of titles are available locally.

One book that would be interesting to read is Liza Dalby's "Geisha." Dalby, an American graduate student of anthropology, made history as the first white woman to become a geisha in Kyoto, Japan, in the '70s. With her writing and her devotion to the subject, she helped erase Western misconceptions about the geisha. Visits to our favorite book haunts have left us empty-handed, but we did find these other titles.

'Memoirs of a Geisha'

Arthur Golden

If you haven't read the novel on which the movie was based, it would be a good idea to start now. And if you've read it, revisit its pages and compare it with the film version.

Follow the journey of Chiyo, from her days in the fishing village to her transformation into Sayuri, one of Gion's most remembered geishas. "Memoirs of a Geisha" is a fairy tale, a soap opera, an exquisite story rife with villains and heroines, greed and kindness, triumphs and conflicts, beauty and ugliness, passion, manipulation and never-ending color.

This gripping first novel reads like a classic. To say that it's hard to put down is an understatement. Some books are so good that after finishing them you want to turn to page one and start again. "Memoirs of a Geisha" is one of them.

'Geisha: A Living Tradition'

Kyoko Aihara

Join Kyoko Aihara as she explores the world of the geisha. Although the book's primary focus is showing how the geisha live in the modern world, the book offers much more than that.

With chapters devoted to Kyoto's Hanamichi Community (a *hanamichi* is a licensed area in Japan where the geisha live and entertain), the *maiko* (an apprentice geisha), banquets, performances and the events that pepper a geisha's calendar—the book provides insight into the lives of Japan's women of art.

There are many interesting details, including how the changing seasons affect the look, the clothes and the accessories of the geisha. There are pages packed with information on the history, hairstyles, makeup of the geisha, their arts, traditions, life in the *okiya* and even how modernization has affected their every day. (My favorite is a photo of a geisha carrying a Salvatore Ferragamo shopping bag.)

Think of it as a crash course—Geisha Lifestyle 101. The book includes many full-color photos and even a glossary and index for easy reading.

'Geisha: Women of Japan's Flower and Willow World'

Tina Skinner and Mary L. Martin

If Kyoko Aihara's book explores the lives of the geisha in the modern world, this book reviews their colorful past, told through beautiful and even haunting images. The photos are drawn from decades-old postcards that were painstakingly tracked down, most of which are now collector's items. The book is filled with over 500 images, with text and captions that not only explain their significance but also impart wisdom on geisha lifestyle and history.

There are chapters on women's role in Edo-Era Japan, on the rise of the geisha and the West's fascination with the geisha, among others. The chapter on famous courtesans and legendary geisha is extra-interesting. Read about several geisha whose misadventures would be tabloid fodder had they been living in the present world. This hardcover book—which also in-

YOUR GEISHA/ D4

Geisha
Women of Japan's Flower & Willow World

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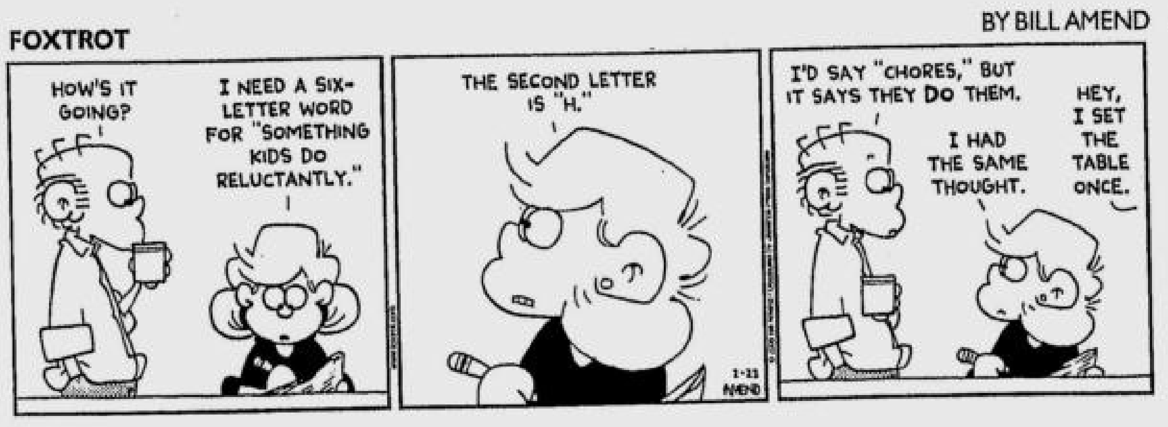
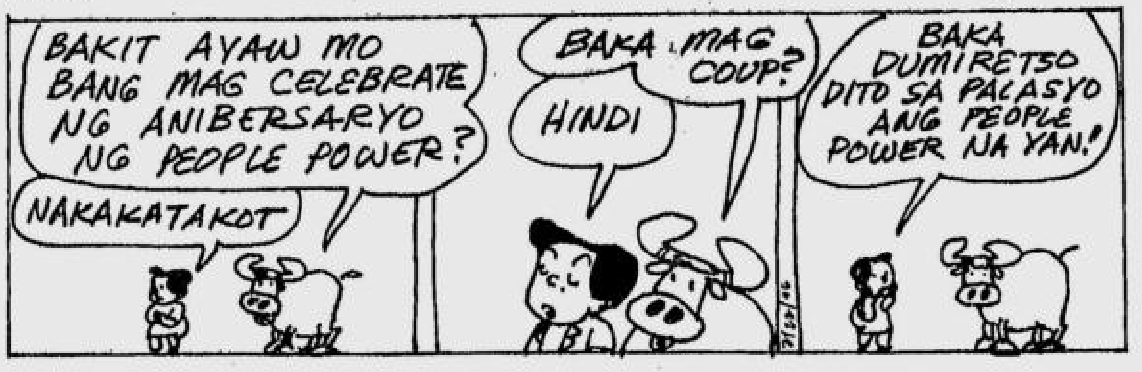
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


HOW'S IT GOING?
I NEED A SIX-LETTER WORD FOR "SOMETHING KIDS DO RELUCTANTLY."
THE SECOND LETTER IS "H."
I'D SAY "CHORES," BUT IT SAYS THEY DO THEM.
I HAD THE SAME THOUGHT.
HEY, I SET THE TABLE ONCE.
1-22 AMEND

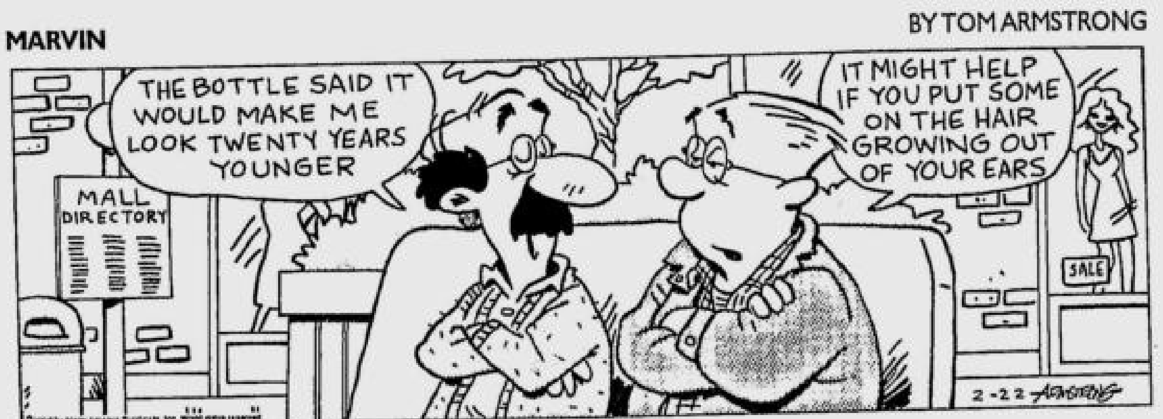
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


BAKIT AYAW MO BANG MAG CELEBRATE NG ANIBERSARYO NG PEOPLE POWER?
NAKAKATAKOT
HINDI
BAKA MAG COUP?
BAKA DUMIRETSO DITO SA PALASYO ANG PEOPLE POWER NA YAN!

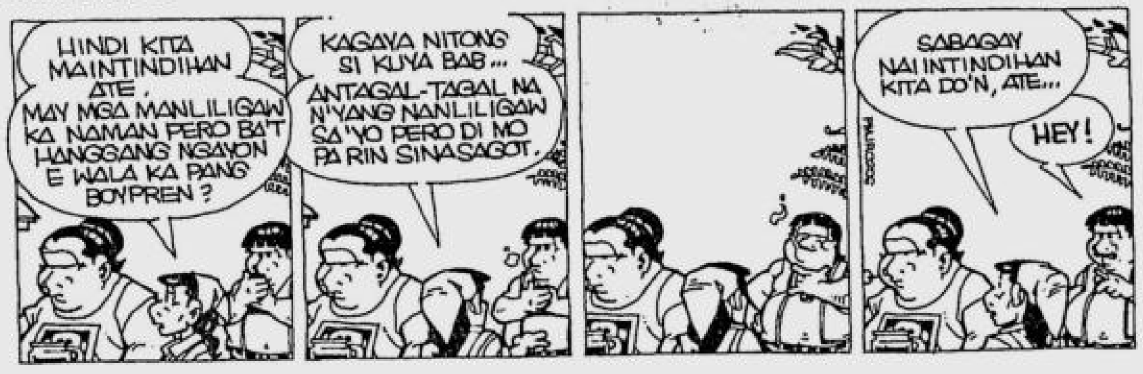
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


THE BOTTLE SAID IT WOULD MAKE ME LOOK TWENTY YEARS YOUNGER
IT MIGHT HELP IF YOU PUT SOME ON THE HAIR GROWING OUT OF YOUR EARS
MALL DIRECTORY
SALE
2-22 ARMSTRONG

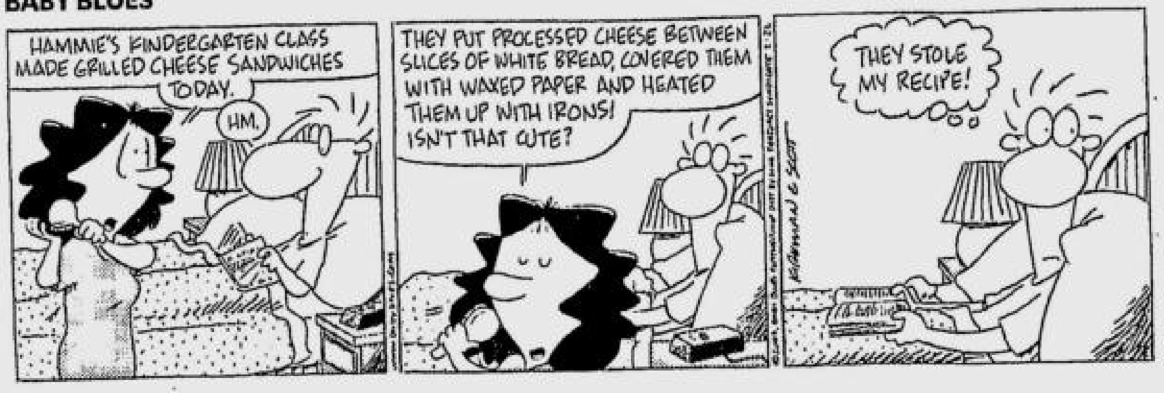
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


HINDI KITA MAINTINDIHAN ATE. MAY MGA MANLILIGAW KA NAMAN PERO BA'T HANGGANG NGAYON E WALA KA PANG BOYPREN?
KAGAYA NITONG SI KUYA BAB... ANTAGAL-TAGAL NA N'YANG NANLILIGAW SA'YO PERO DI MO PA RIN SINASAGOT.
SABAGAY NAIINTINDIHAN KITA DO'N, ATE...
HEY!

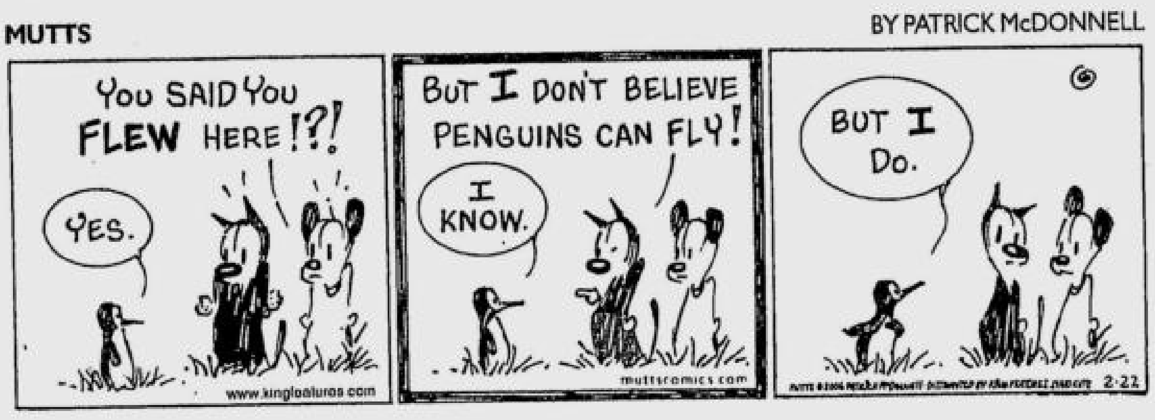
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


HAMMIE'S KINDERGARTEN CLASS MADE GRILLED CHEESE SANDWICHES TODAY.
HM.
THEY PUT PROCESSED CHEESE BETWEEN SLICES OF WHITE BREAD, COVERED THEM WITH WAXED PAPER AND HEATED THEM UP WITH IRONS! ISN'T THAT CUTE?
THEY STOLE MY RECIPE!

MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


YOU SAID YOU FLEW HERE!?!
YES.
BUT I DON'T BELIEVE PENGUINS CAN FLY!
I KNOW.
BUT I DO.
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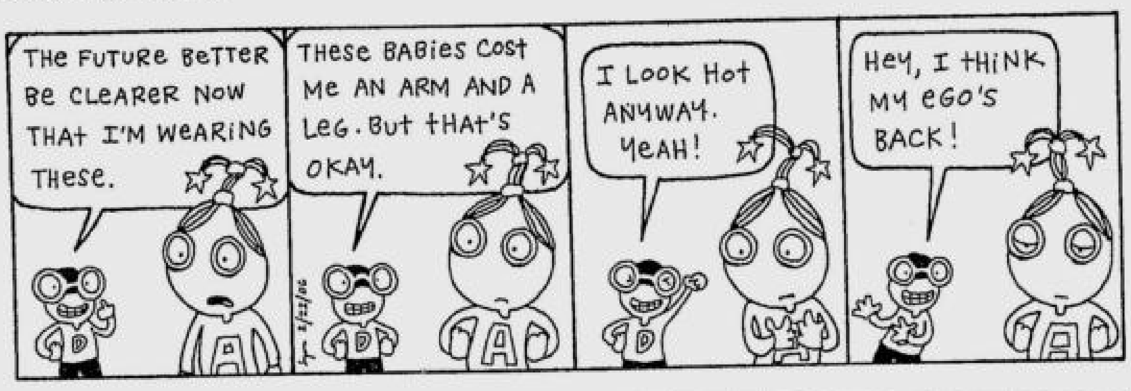
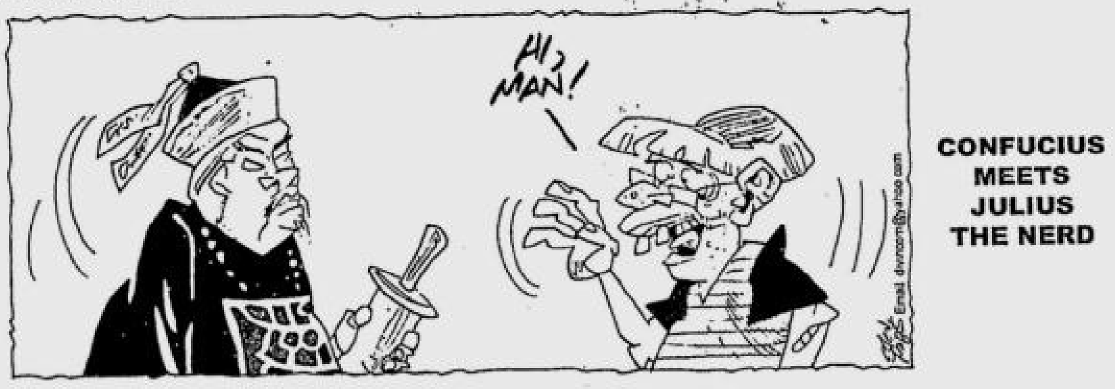
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


The FUTURE BETTER BE CLEARER NOW THAT I'M WEARING THESE.
THESE BABIES COST ME AN ARM AND A LEG. BUT THAT'S OKAY.
I LOOK HOT ANYWAY. YEAH!
HEY, I THINK MY EGO'S BACK!

DIVINE COMEDY

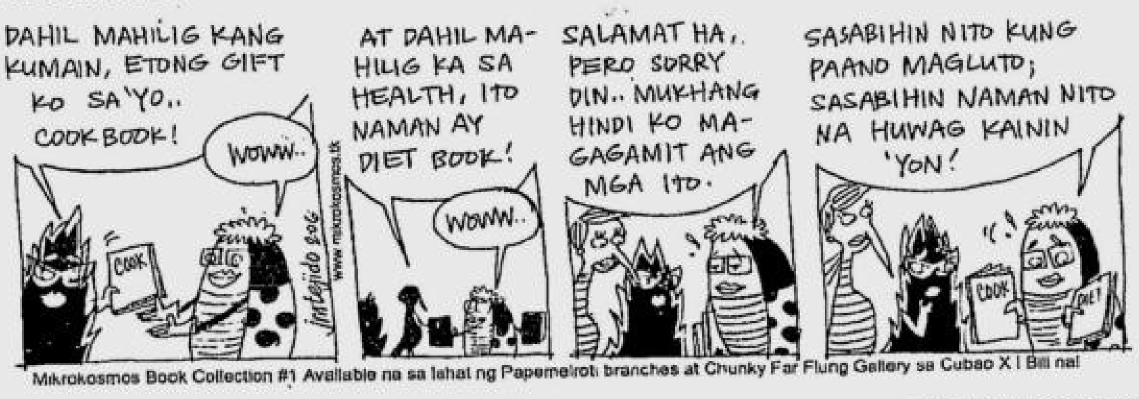
BY STEVEN PABALINAS



CONFUCIUS MEETS JULIUS THE NERD

MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


DAHIL MAHILIG KANG KUMAIN, ETONG GIFT KO SA'YO.. COOKBOOK!
WOWW..
COOK
tejido 2006
www.mikrokosmos.tk
AT DAHIL MAHILIG KA SA HEALTH, ITO NAMAN AY DIET BOOK!
WOWW..
SALAMAT HA, PERO SORRY DIN.. MUKHANG HINDI KO MAGAGAMIT ANG MGA ITO.
SASABIHIN NITO KUNG PAANO MAGLUTO; SASABIHIN NAMAN NITO NA HUWAG KAININ 'YON!
COOK
DIET

Mikrokosmos Book Collection #1 Available na sa lahat ng Papemelroti branches at Chunky Far Flung Gallery sa Cubao X | Bili na!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're a sweet, unselfish, generous person. You have a kind heart. Because of this, you are often dedicated to a noble cause. This cause might be humble, such as your family, or very worldly. You want to make the world a better place. Expect major changes this year, perhaps as significant as 1997.

Birthdate of: Jeri Ryan, actress; Vijay Singh, golfer; Drew Barrymore, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You might talk to somebody today who actually changes your beliefs system or your point of view about something. This person is so powerful that you find you're influenced even more than you suspect.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You're possessive about money or shared possessions today. You want to make sure you get your share. You're not going to let go of something unless you know the reason why.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Somebody else has bright ideas about how you can improve yourself. You might not agree! People like this should apply their ideas to themselves.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You'll work very hard at your job today. This is a good day to finish old work and get rid of stuff you no longer need. You might do something that is slightly secretive or very private.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You feel passionately attracted to someone today. (Of course, you're a romantic.) You want to love someone, and you want someone to love you. (Don't we all!)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You have the energy to clean up dirty, dark garbage areas today. Tackle laundry areas, basements and garages. Throw away or recycle stuff you don't need.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You're convinced you're right about something today. You're so convinced, you want others to agree with you or acknowledge your views. (Don't try to coerce others into your way of thinking. Lighten up.)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You feel obsessed about buying something today. Perhaps you're obsessed about earning your money in a certain way. Either way, you can't get this idea out of your mind.

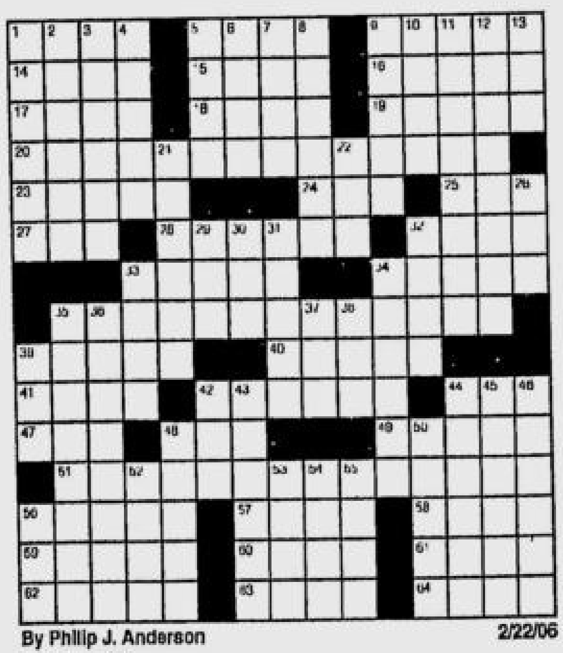
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): If you have bright ideas about how to improve your appearance or your health, listen to them. You're probably onto a good thing.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Any kind of research you do today will be extremely productive. You're willing to look under every stone. Nothing is too much trouble. You're like a dog with a bone.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Powerful friends might try to persuade you to do something today. You don't have to. Think about this.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Conversations with bosses and parents are intense today. You could have a standoff with someone. People want you to do something—but do you want to?

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR

2/22/06

ACROSS
1 Four-posters
5 Choir member
9 Gravy flaw
14 Jai __
15 Way out
16 WW2 craft
17 Angle on a news story
18 Taj Mahal spot
19 To the point
20 Outback justice?
23 __ Park, CO
24 Sass
25 "Sands of __ Jima"
27 Plaything
28 Cap adornment
32 Novelist Oz
33 Roomy car
34 PC operators
35 Office magpie?
39 Literary convention
40 Cotton fabrics
41 Business type, slangily
42 "The __ Cometh"
44 Links org.
47 Golfer Ernie
48 Theater-sign letters
49 Celebratory events
51 Scopes Trial?
56 Hawkins of Dogpatch
57 River to the Seine
58 Latin farewell
59 Inscribed stone pillar
60 Forum wear
61 Egyptian deity
62 Return to defaults
63 Panache
64 Why don't we?

DOWN
1 Type of case?
2 Neighbor of Juarez
3 Delicate
4 Scorch
5 Hebrew month
6 Company emblem
7 Deere competitor
8 Prophetic shrine
9 Ease, as rain
10 Over in Oberhausen
11 One of Edgar's dummies
12 Log-on need
13 Fr. holy woman
21 Fall flowers
22 Peanut product
26 WW2 spy group
29 Fruit drink
30 Posed
31 Harry Potter's potions professor
32 Yard sale caveat
33 Glaswegian, e.g.
34 River to the Congo
35 Perfect match
36 Serial segments
37 Edge
38 Singer Sumac
39 Hemi-fly?
42 High dudgeon
43 Prairie wolf
44 Gratify
45 Brightened by an old flame?
46 Take stock of
48 Shotgun sport
50 Blacksmith's block
52 Aswan Dam river
53 Life sci.
54 Links grp.
55 Hayes or Penn
56 Lat. or Lith., once

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

B	A	N	F	F	■	A	B	E	T	■	A	R	A	B
A	T	A	R	I	■	N	O	R	A	■	L	E	D	A
R	E	V	O	L	V	I	N	G	S	T	A	G	E	S
■	■	■	S	E	E	T	O	■	T	H	I	R	S	T
H	I	G	H	T	E	A	■	L	Y	E	■	E	T	E
A	G	O	■	■	■	S	H	E	■	M	O	W	E	D
H	O	G	T	I	E	■	O	N	I	O	N	■	■	■
■	R	O	U	N	D	A	N	D	R	O	U	N	D	■
■	■	■	N	I	T	R	O	■	E	N	S	U	R	E
E	R	N	S	T	■	M	R	S	■	■	■	D	I	S
L	E	E	■	I	C	Y	■	U	N	S	W	E	P	T
I	S	A	I	A	H	■	A	R	E	N	A	■	■	■
C	I	R	C	L	E	T	H	E	W	A	G	O	N	S
I	D	E	O	■	A	R	A	S	■	R	E	T	R	O
T	E	R	N	■	P	A	S	T	■	E	S	S	A	Y

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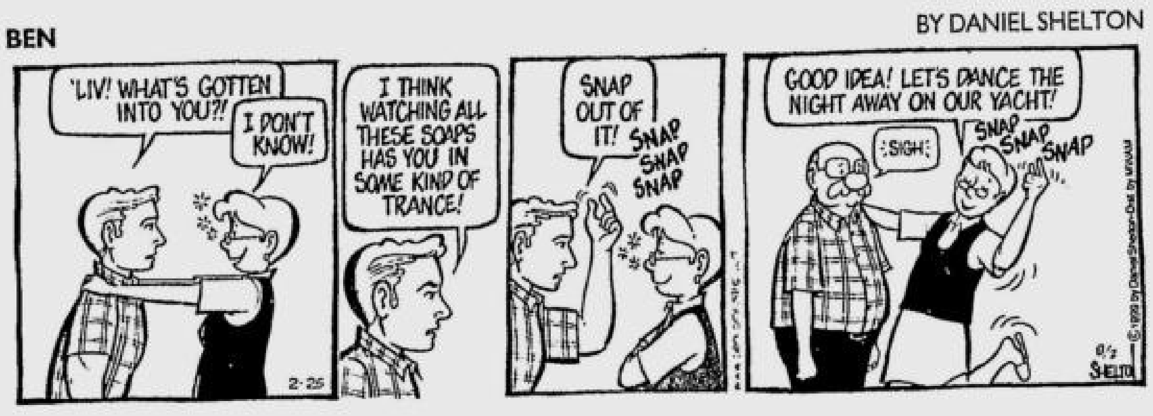
2/22/06

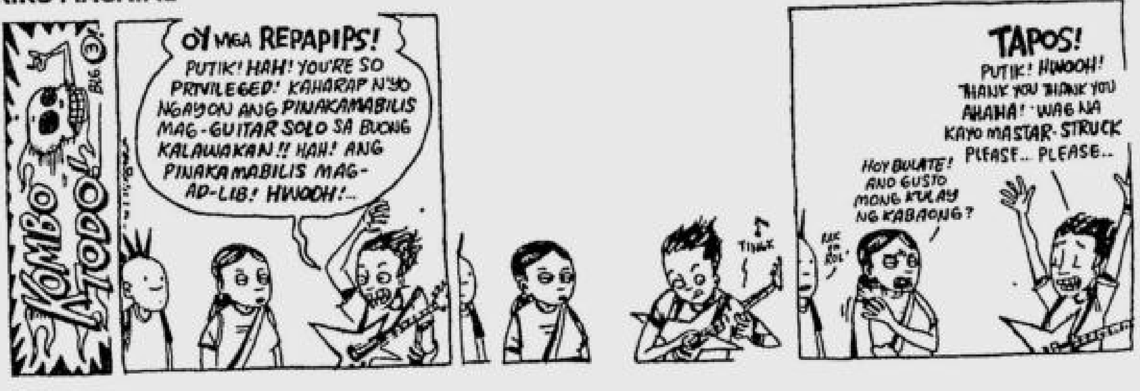
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


'LIV! WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU?!
I DON'T KNOW!
2-25
I THINK WATCHING ALL THESE SOAPS HAS YOU IN SOME KIND OF TRANCE!
SNAP OUT OF IT!
SNAP SNAP SNAP
GOOD IDEA! LET'S DANCE THE NIGHT AWAY ON OUR YACHT!
:SIGH:
SNAP SNAP SNAP
SHELTON

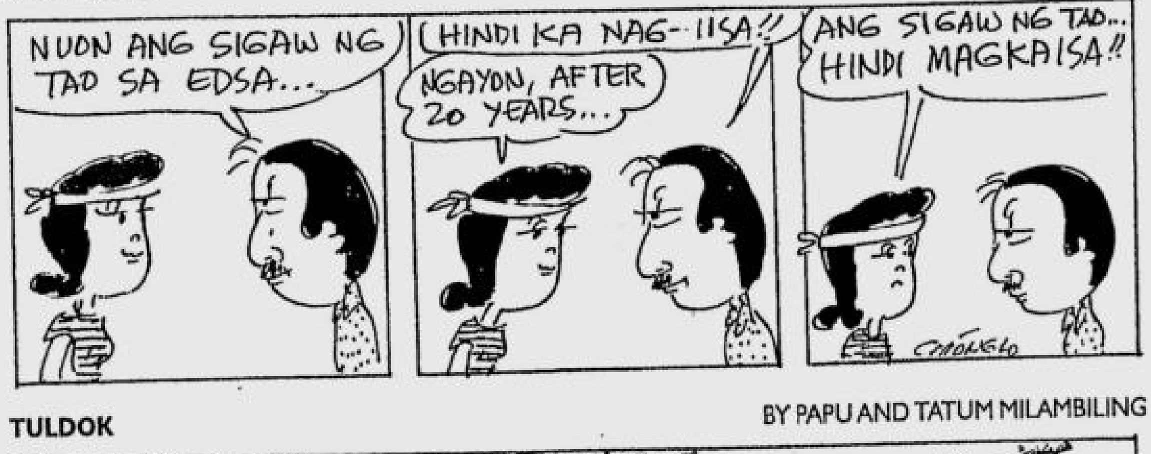
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


KOMBO TODO!
OY MGA REPAPIPS! PUTIK! HAH! YOU'RE SO PRIVILEGED! KAHARAP N'YO NGAYON ANG PINAKAMABILIS MAG-GUITAR SOLO SA BUONG KALAWAKAN!! HAH! ANG PINAKAMABILIS MAG-AD-LIB! HWOOH!..
TINK
HOY BULATE! ANO GUSTO MONG KULAY NG KABAONG?
TAPOS! PUTIK! HWOOH! THANK YOU THANK YOU AHAHA! 'WAG NA KAYO MASTAR-STRUCK PLEASE... PLEASE..

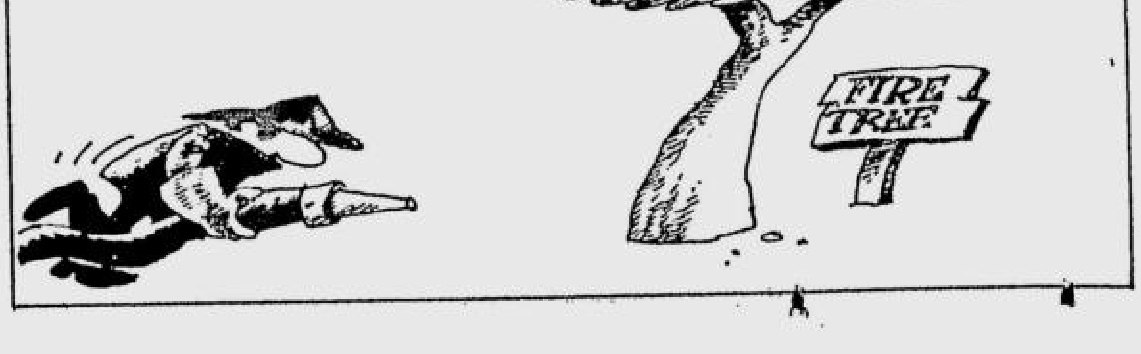
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


NUON ANG SIGAW NG TAO SA EDSA...
HINDI KA NAG-IISA!!
NGAYON, AFTER 20 YEARS...
ANG SIGAW NG TAO.. HINDI MAGKAISA!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING



SALMON and Cream Cheese Maki

SESAME Prawn on Toast with Sweet Chili Sauce

CHICKEN Teriyaki with potato hay garnish

Slip into this Red Kimono

After watching 'Memoirs of a Geisha,' drop by Red Kimono for great Japanese food with a modern twist

By Pam Pastor

THE RESTAURANT'S NAME came to them in a dream. And while turning Red Kimono into reality took more than just closing their eyes for deep slumber, Mike Dargani and his wife Nameeta still believe they were lucky.

"Everything just fell into place; the pieces fit," Mike said.

Luck began with the restaurant's location—they were able to secure a prime spot at The Fort Strip. "We were very excited about the location. The Fort Strip is happening," Mike added.

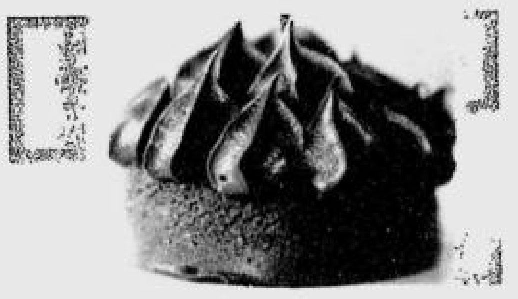
Mike signed the lease for the space just hours before he and Nameeta left for a trip to Europe, a journey that played a part in building their restaurant's concept. "That trip was instrumental," Nameeta said. "The timing was amazing. We were so inspired to be creative."

They returned from their trip energized and brimming with fresh ideas. And in three month's time, Red Kimono opened for business. This isn't their first venture in the food arena—Red Kimono is the 10th restaurant they have opened.

Red Kimono's interiors don't look like your traditional Japanese resto. It's trendy and the vibe is upbeat.

"We wanted to do modern Japanese. We wanted to tweak things, to play with ingredients," Mike said. And that's exactly what they did.

CHOCOLATE Balls


FLOURLESS Chocolate Cake

Mike and Nameeta created the menu with their executive chef who had trained with several Japanese chefs. That hard work has paid off in the loyal following Red Kimono has gained since opening in July of last year. "The response has been amazing," Mike said.

That's no big surprise because the food is good.

Sushi fans should check out the Sushi Bar Specials. They're so good they can turn non-sushi eaters into instant converts. Try the Salmon and Cream Cheese Maki (P195), which is rolled with fresh salmon and Philadelphia cream cheese. The Crunchy Maki are yummy rolls that are stuffed and topped with tuna (P180), ebi (P180) or unagi (P200). Try the California Crunch (P190), too—a deep-fried crispy version of the good-old California Maki.

Other great appetizers include the Crabstick Roll served with Wasabi Mayonnaise, (P160) and the Sesame Prawn on Toast with Sweet Chili Sauce (P240), both of which are must-orders. Tofu lovers would enjoy the Layered Spinach and Tofu with Sweet Miso Paste (P135).

Diners have a lot of options for the main course. If chicken is your favorite, choose from Chicken Teriyaki (grilled chicken in teriyaki sauce with a potato hay garnish, P210), Chicken Katsu Curry (breaded chicken served with curry sauce, P220) or Grilled Miso Chicken (served with a side of cucumber salad and steamed white rice, P210).

Meat-eaters would love the Ginger and Garlic Steak (grilled fillet of beef tenderloin with a vegetable siding, P395) and the Beef Teppanyaki which comes in local (P330) and US Black Angus (P650) variants.

If seafood is your choice, order the Prawn Teppanyaki (stir-fried prawns and vegetables, P395). The prawns are so plump and juicy. The Gindara with Sweet Miso (P595) is likewise delectable, the fish succulent and its texture perfect.

Red Kimono also serves Kamameshi—flavorful rice served in individual pots and generously topped with chicken, beef, shrimp or a mixture of the three. It's a meal in itself.

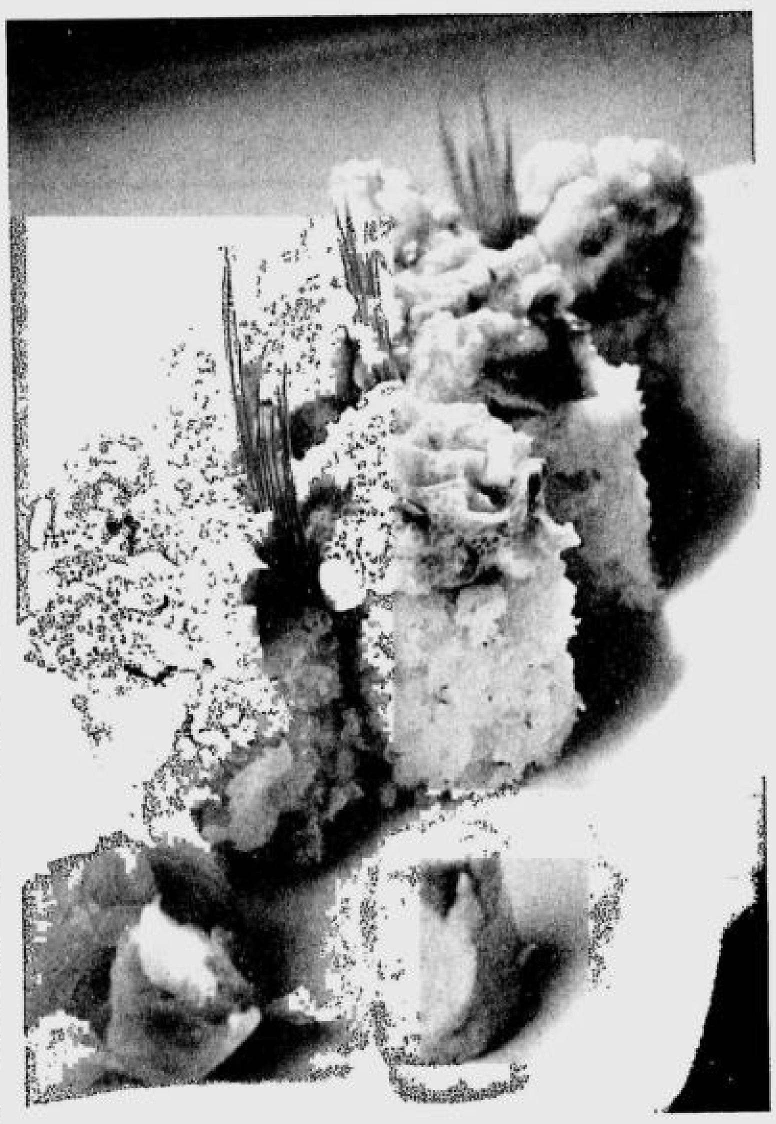
If you still have room for dessert, try the Chocolate Balls (P100)—a big hit with kids—or the yummy Pecan Pie, which is served with a big scoop of vanilla ice cream. You can also try the Tempura Ice Cream or the Flourless Chocolate Cake.

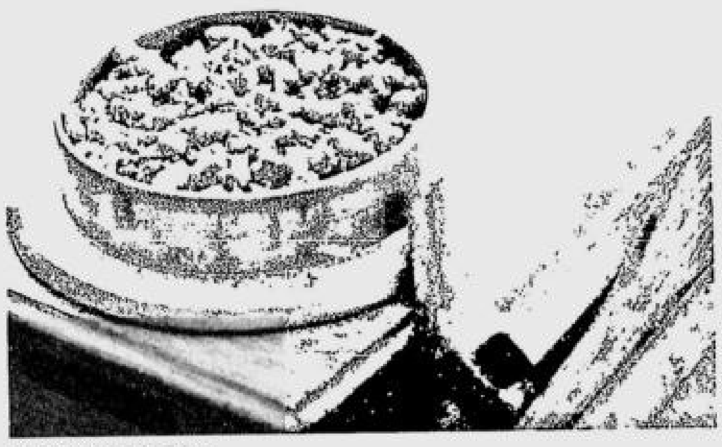
And for those who want to cap their meal with a nice drink, Red Kimono's sake cocktails are a good choice.

One of Nameeta's priorities was making sure the menu items wouldn't be overpriced. "We're such foodies, we're so adventurous with food, we love to eat out but we always try to find good value. We respect that in a restaurant," she said.

Red Kimono is located at Unit 1A at the G/F of The Fort Strip, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig. Call 8166642.

E-mail the author at ppastor@inquirer.com.ph.


CRUNCHY Ebi Maki


KAMAMESHI Rice

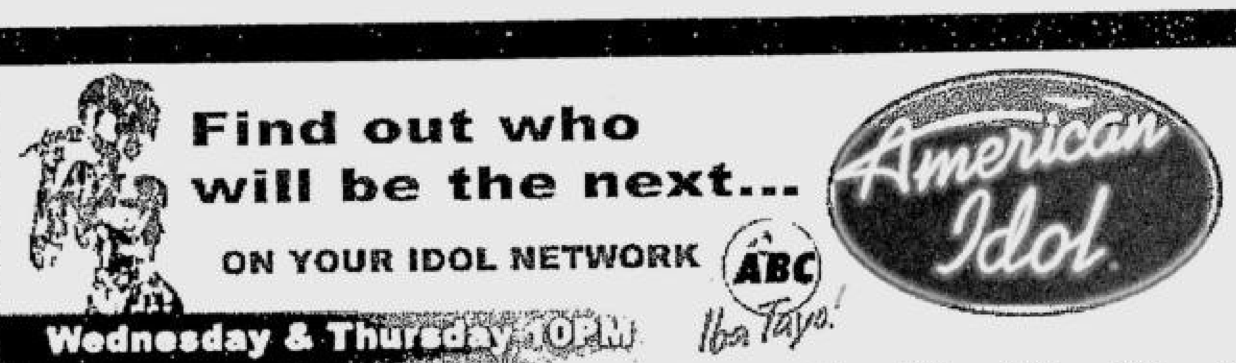
CRABSTICK Roll with Wasabi Mayo

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE

Wednesday, February 22, 2006

Find out who will be the next...
ON YOUR IDOL NETWORK ABC Iba Tayo!
American Idol
Wednesday & Thursday 10PM



ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5			WNCAA (Rerun)		PBA				Sentro	PBA					Big News	American Idol			Insider
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema			Pasion de Amor	Little Amy	Mr. Bean	Naruto	Amazing Twins		TV Patrol World	Gulong Ng Palad	Mga Anghel Na Walang Langit	Princess Lulu	Pinoy Big Brother		S.O.C.O.			
AXN		Mondo Magic Singapore	Boarding Pass	Next Action Star		When Animals Attack		Lost		Numb3rs (Season 1)		30 Seconds To Fame	Samsung Sports World	Ultimate Guinness World Records	Ultimate Guinness World Records	CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (Season 6)		CSI: Miami (Season II)	
Cartoon Network	Johnny Bravo	Dexter's Laboratory	Tom & Jerry Show		Baby Looney Tunes	Codename: Kids Next Door	Foster's Home For Imaginary Friends	The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	Power Rangers Wild Force	The Gransazers	Battle B-Daman	Energy Bomb	X-Men Evolution	Samurai Jack	Justice League	Static Shock	Power Rangers Wild Force	The Gransazers
Cinema One		Galawgaw				Fatima Buen Story				Sabel			Persona	Dekada 70 (9:15 PM)				Maluha Ka Sa Tingin	
Cinemax	Guarding Tess (2:45 PM)				Mr. Deeds Goes To Town				On Hostile Ground			Don't Talk To Strangers			Into The Sun			Clear And Present Danger	
CNN				Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International		World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport
Discovery Channel		Zero Hour		American Chopper		Man Made Marvels		Secrets To Survival		Wild Discovery		Hour China		Seven Wonders Ancient Greece		A Haunting		Secrets To Survival	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Un-talkative Bunny	Mickey Mouse and Friends	Lilo & Stitch	Sabrina, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			American Dragon		Mickey Mouse and Friends	Chip N Dale's Rescue Ranger	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN		Pro Billiards '04 Sudden Death 7-Ball NV USA		Mosconi Cup '02		Winter X Games Classic CO USA		Motorsport Asia	Pool Snooker World Pool League '05 Poland		Sportscenter Asia	Pool/ Snooker World Pool League '05 Poland		Motorsport Asia	LPGA Golf SBS Open @ Turtle Bay Hillwall 3rd Round				Sportscenter Asia
ETC		Average Joe		Change of Heart	Elimidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		Veronica Mars		Beauty & The Geek		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
EWTN	Marriage Works In Christ	Angelus (3:15 PM)	Faith In Motion	Adventures In Odyssey	EWTN Original Productions	Rosary With Mother Angelica	Defending Life	EWTN Gallery	In The Heart Of The Church	Mother Angelica Live Classics		One In Their Hearts	Catholic Social Teaching	Daily Mass (SAP) Live		Angelus (10:15PM)	Carpenter's Shop	Our Father's Plan	
Fox News		Hannity & Colmes		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Fox & Friends						Fox News Live			
GMA 7	Kung Mamahalin Mo Lang Ako	Now and Forever	First Love Of A Royale Prince		Dragonball Z	Great Teacher Onizuka	La Robe de Mariage	24 Oras		Extra Challenge	Etheria	Starstruck 3	My Name Is Kim Sam Soon	Jewel In The Palace		Nuts Entertainment			Saksi
Hallmark Channel	Bewitched	Family Law III		Bug (3:50 PM)			Who's The Boss? II	Bewitched	The Nanny	Strong Medicine		Judging Amy		Heart Of A Stranger			Sue Thomas: F.B. Eye II		Strong Medicine
HBO	Going For Broke			Breakin' All The Rules			The Chronicles Of Riddick				The Great Outdoors			Mona Lisa Smile				Christine	
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Lifestyle		Home Shopping Network		ME TV		Japan Video Topics		Up Close And Personal	IBC News Tonite	Home Shopping Network	
JackTV	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	The Late Show David Letterman		Heat		Velocity		X-Men	Street Smarts	Mad TV		That 70s Show	Arrested Development	The Late Show David Letterman		The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Premium Blend	Primetime Glick	Chappelle Show
Lifestyle Network	Country Style	Interiors By Design	Decorating With Style	Decorating Cents	Molto Mario	Sweet Dreams	30 Minute Meals	Bill Boggs Corner	Unwrapped	Wolfgang Puck's	E! Entertainment Special		Style Star	Life & Style		Fine Living Special		Intimate Portrait	
MTV Philippines	Jams	Whatever Things	MTV Hits		The 70's House	Pop Inc		MTV Hits				Homecoming	Get Spotted	TRL		Viva La Bam	Laguna Beach	Get Hitch'd	VH1 Video Collections
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	OPM MYX	MYX Firsts	Star MYX	MYXilog	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		MYX Live!		Urban MYX	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX
National Geographic	Wild Family Secrets	Hunter Hunted		Interpol Investigates		Science Times		Top 5 - Mysterious Universe		Wow!		About Asia		Nat'l Geographic Specials		Hunter Hunted		Interpol Investigates	
NBN		Value Vision		New Life TV Shopping		Teledyaryo	Dyos Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Sila?	Talk Ko To		Tinig ng Bayan (Live)		Teledyaryo				Krusada Kontra Krimen		Bantay OCW With Susan K	
Nickelodeon	Chalkzone	Hey Arnold!	Rocket Power	Four Eyes	My Life As A Teenage Robot	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	The Fairly Odd Parents	Drake & Josh	Naturally Sadie	Romeo	All That	All Grown Up	As Told By Ginger	Four Eyes	My Life As A Teenage Robot	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	The Fairly Odd Parents	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Akyat Bahay Gang				Banyuhay				Bukas Luluhod Ang Mga Tala				[illegible]				Sabado Nights
Qtv	Ikaw Lang Ang Mamahalin		Striker Hungry Heart	The Prince Of Tennis	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Love At Aegean Sea	Irene	Mars	Laugh To Laugh: Ang Kulit	Now Na!		News On Q	Balikbayan		MINT (Music Interactive)	
RPN 9	TV Shopping		Defenders Of The Earth	Global Window				Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	Iron Chef		Trading Spouses		Extreme Make-Over		Newswatch Now	Just For Laughs (Gags)	Money Talk	
SBN 21				New Life TV Shopping				Winner TV Shopping				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		SBN Music Video			
Solar Sports		Davis Cup '05 Heineken 2005 HK Badminton SF2 WD WS MD						Sagupaan	Boxing: Viloria vs. Aguirre	Sportsdesk					Sportsdesk	All-England Finals			
Sports Plus		ACC Basketball Duke @ Wake Forest				World Poker Tour 2				NBA Game Minnesota @ Washington					NBA Game Golden State @ Sacramento				
Star Movies			Lethal Seduction			Grosse Pointe Blank				Die Hard 2: Die Harder (6:55 PM)				Erin Brockovich				Around The World In Eighty Days (11:15PM)	
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		Angel		American Idol 2006		Star News Asia	Friends (Series 10)	American Idol 2006		Medical Investigation		Smallville		Friends (Series 10)	American Idol 2006
Studio 23								Batman Beyond	Spirits	Wazzup Wazzup	The Amazing Race Family Edition		CSI (8:20 PM)	Life As We Know It (9:10 PM)		News Central	Oprah		Just Shoot Me

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

Nippon beauties

By Pam Pastor
Photos by Ryan Lim

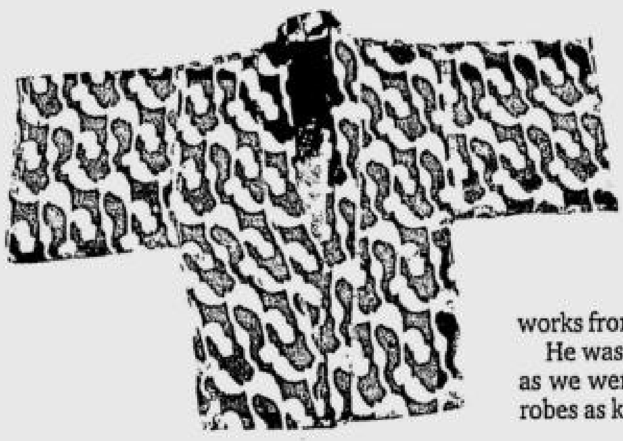
IF YOU'RE DREAMING OF INCORPORATING the glorious kimono into your wardrobe (yes, it can look pretty hot with jeans) but trips to the mall have left you with zilch, we have the answer.

And no, you don't have to go all the way to Japan—just Lucban, Quezon.

FASHION FREAKS

Romy Glorioso, who has a passion for all things Asian, has been creating beautiful kimono tops using rich materials and fabrics. Some of his kimonos are even reversible.

He doesn't mass-produce his creations, so you can be sure your kimono is unique. Glorioso can also make kimonos to suit your own specifications.



And he doesn't stop at kimonos. He also makes other Asian-inspired clothes and has become popular for his home accessories as well. People love his placemats, napkins, tablecloths, throw pillows, bags, bed covers and lanterns.

Although he sometimes participates in bazaars and wedding fairs, Glorioso mostly works from his shop in Lucban.

He was a discovery—a gift that arrived just as we were ready to pass off 168-bought silk robes as kimonos.

Romy's shop is at Banahaw Subdivision 1 in Lucban, Quezon. Call 042-5408411 or 0920-5766122.

Do you want the fashion freaks to visit your store or check out your wares? E-mail us at thefashionfreaks@yahoo.com.

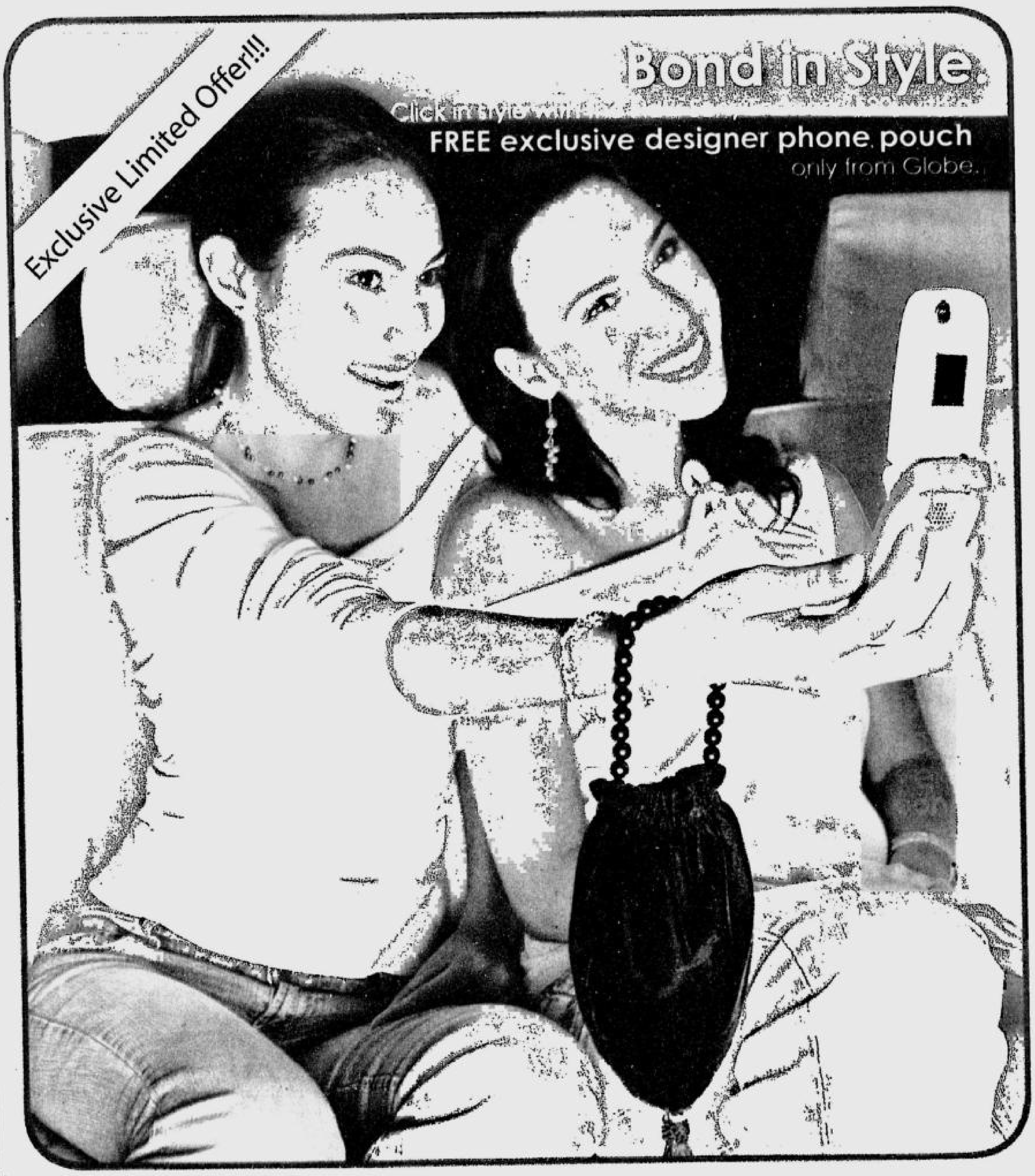
MOST kimonos are reversible, with different designs on each side.

ROMY uses silk and satin to make his kimonos but clients can request other fabrics.

PRICES range from P700-P1,000.

FEEL like Sayuri in one of these creations.

Sony Ericsson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Z520i

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Easy to use VGA camera with video / Media player - MP3/AAC (audio), MPEG4 (video)
QuickShare™ - Bluetooth, Infrared, MMS / 16 MB memory

See flyers for details. Promo period is from Feb. 10 to Mar. 31, 2006
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0867. Series of 2006.

Your geisha . . .

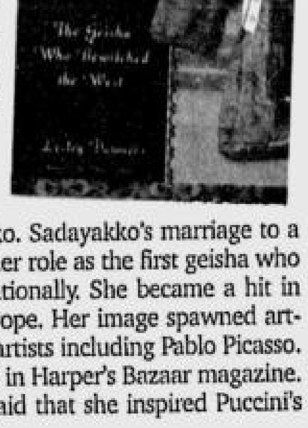
From page D1

cludes a glossary and bibliography—is a captivating read. You can spend hours poring over it.

'Madame Sadayakko: The Geisha Who Bewitched the West'

Lesley Downer

Madame Sadayakko is included and tagged as "The Penultimate Star" in the chapter on legendary geisha in "Geisha: Women of Japan's Flower and Willow World." In "The Geisha Who Bewitched the West," Lesley Downer tells the legendary geisha's life story.



Downer, who was applauded for her book "Women of the Pleasure Quarters," put together Sadayakko's story using newspaper clippings, other writings and attempts to contact relatives who remember Sadayakko. Sadayakko's marriage to a poor actor led to her role as the first geisha who performed internationally. She became a hit in the US and in Europe. Her image spawned artworks by famous artists including Pablo Picasso. She also appeared in Harper's Bazaar magazine. It has also been said that she inspired Puccini's Madame Butterfly.

"The Geisha Who Bewitched the West," which follows Sadayakko's rise as a performer, includes black-and-white photos of the actress. Downer's 2003 book has been referred to as a real-life "Memoirs of a Geisha." With her words, Downer paints a portrait of this bold and bewitching geisha.

The books are available at PowerBooks branches nationwide.

NEWS/A2

Magdalo denies AFP claim of links with communists

NEWS/A18

Paunches, receding hairlines mark RAM's first reunion in 20 years

Malacañang declares Saturday, Feb. 25, a special non-working holiday, which is the last day of the four-day celebration of the 20th anniversary of Edsa People Power I.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Thursday, Feb [illegible] 3, 2006 ★★ 4 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 77 P18 website: www.inq7.net

Archbishop Rosales now a prince of the Church

ROSALES

By Leila B. Salaverria

MANILA ARCHBISHOP Gaudencio Rosales has been made a cardinal by Pope Benedict XVI, outgoing Papal Nuncio Archbishop Antonio Franco announced last night at a

ARCHBISHOP/ A6

In show of force, people relive first day of Edsa I

By DJ Yap, Luige A. del Puerto and Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

PEOPLE TOOK IT UPON THEMSELVES TO COMmemorate yesterday the 20th anniversary of the "People Power" revolution that toppled the dictator Ferdinand Marcos, because of the low-key celebration of the historic event by the Arroyo administration.

IN SHOW/ A6

THE WAY THEY WERE: During the unexpected huge turnout of Filipinos celebrating Edsa I on its 20th anniversary, they fondly remember the impact of flower power on the men in uniform. As the Arroyo government downplays Edsa I, people take it upon themselves on the first day commemoration of the four-day People Power revolt on Feb. 22, 1986 to mass at Edsa and reclaim their legacy. JOAN BONDOC

Power groups act to end crisis

Cory, Bro. Mike, big businessmen, Hyatt 10 meet

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

SAYING THE RESOLUTION OF the crisis facing the country should not be left to politicians alone, a powerhouse group of businessmen, religious leaders and former high government officials met yesterday to discuss how to end the potentially dangerous political deadlock.

The low-key unannounced meeting convened by the Makati Business Club was attended by prominent businessmen led by Ayala Corp. chief Jaime Augusto Zobel Ayala, El Shaddai leader Bro. Mike Velarde and a bloc of anti-Arroyo forces led by former President Corazon Aquino.

"There is a sense of urgency that the political crisis has to be resolved at the soonest time possible because the constitutional venues for resolving this crisis are narrowing down and we don't want to be left with extra-constitutional alternatives," former Education Secretary Butch Abad told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

POWER/ A6

RETURN OF THE NATIVE. Imelda Marcos whose home province is Leyte meets up with President Arroyo on Wednesday at the village of Guinsaugon, St. Bernard. *(Story on Page A4.)*

Chicken revives flagging spirits

By Christian V. Esguerra, Jani Arnaiz and Connie E. Fernandez

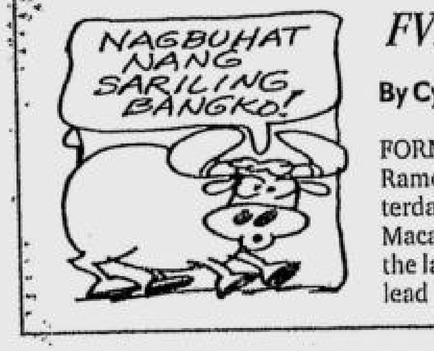
GUINSAUGON, ST. BERNARD, Southern Leyte—A live chicken found deep in the ruins of a house yesterday revived flagging hopes of finding human survivors nearly a week after the massive landslide here.

Rescuers extracted the fowl along with the bodies of a woman and a child at around 2 p.m., said Maj. Gen. Bonifacio Ramos, overall ground commander of the multinational rescue operation.

"If there's a live chicken, there might also be people breathing underneath [the mud]. It's a good sign," Ramos told the INQUIRER at around 3 p.m.

It was the first time that rescuers, now digging more than 15

CHICKEN/ A4



NAGBUHAT NANG SARILING BANGKO!

FVR ridicules GMA 'best person' claim

By Cynthia D. Balana

FORMER PRESIDENTS FIDEL Ramos and Corazon Aquino yesterday shrugged off President Macapagal-Arroyo's claim that the latter was the "best person" to lead the nation until 2010 in the proposed transition to a parliamentary form of government.

"That's just one person's opinion," Ramos told reporters at the opening of the photo exhibit on the 1986 People Power revolt at Edsa by photographer Sonny Ca-

FVR RIDICULES/ A5

Esperon: 14 plotters squealed

By Dona Pazzibugan and Fe Zamora

A DAY AFTER BEING BYPASSED for confirmation, Army chief Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon disclosed that the military had identified 14 junior officers involved in a plot to oust President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Most of the officers, however, were released after they revealed details of the coup plot during questioning, Esperon said.

"Many of them have joined us and have returned to their units ... They are now on our side. A few of them are now restrained [in their quarters]," Esperon said at a news conference in Camp Aguinaldo yesterday.

Esperon did not identify the officers, who held the ranks of captain, first lieutenant and second lieutenant.

He said the military was able to identify the 14 last month after they recovered a list supposedly containing the names of some of the plotters.

The 14 officers had supposedly recruited about 200 enlisted personnel to participate in another military uprising

Esperon said the recruits had a

ESPERON/ A6

'Where's God? Why did He take away our loved ones?'

By Jani Arnaiz and Connie Fernandez
PDI Visayas Bureau

ST. BERNARD, SOUTHERN Leyte—The pent-up anguish of the survivors of the mudslide in Barangay Guinsaugon burst like a dam during a Mass celebrated on Tuesday at the evacuation center.

It was during communion at the 6 p.m. Mass, which was intended for the dead and those still missing, when survivors and bereaved relatives started weeping as the choir sang the moving song "Tanging Yaman."

Per the account of a Gawad Kalin-

WHERE'S/ A4

EDSA I 20

THE MILITARY

When mistahs embrace

By Buddy Resurreccion

(The writer was a Constabulary captain who resigned his commission the day before Edsa I began. He is now an INQUIRER Golf columnist.)

IT WAS AN AGE OF FERMENT. THE EXCESSES of the Marcos regime and the politization of the AFP weighed heavily on my mind as I wrestled with the question of whether to stay in the service or get out.

I decided to get out, but not with a whimper. I announced my resignation before local and foreign media—and in the company of such opposition leaders as Doy and Pepito Laurel and Ernie Maceda.

WHEN/ A18

THE PEOPLE

Stargazing on wondrous night

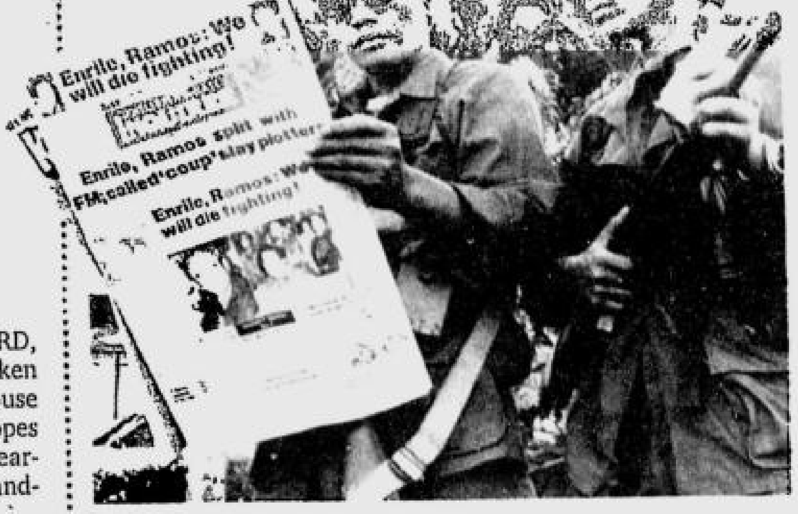
By Karen N. Tañada

DO EDSA VETERANS REMEMBER THE HUGE red and black flag that marked the edge of the People Power crowd on the corner of Edsa and Boni Serrano on the Camp Crame side?

Nicknamed "Super-K," the flag belonged to Kasapi (Kapulungan ng mga Sandigan ng Pilipinas). Kasapi was one of the democratic socialist political organizations that since 1970 had been working for radical social transformation.

The Edsa event was the actualization of Kasapi's strategy of PUI or People's Urban Insurrec-

STARGAZING/ A20



Enrile, Ramos: We will die fighting!
Enrile, Ramos split with FM; called 'coup' plotters
Enrile, Ramos: We will die fighting!

TRIPLE TREAT: Note 3 headlines in PDI issue of Feb. 23, 1986.

'Twas like Good Friday

By Fernando del Mundo

AT 6 FEET WITH CAUCASIAN FEATURES, Uriel G. Borja looked just like one of those American correspondents who had descended on Edsa when the People Power revolution broke out.

Adding to the image of a parachute journalist was the reporter's vest he wore, the camera slung around his neck and the bluster in his voice that normally had a melodious Cebuano accent.

A volunteer in Corazon Aquino's election campaign, Borja had flown to Manila from Iligan City that fateful Sunday—Feb. 23, 1986—after he heard the news of Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile's breakaway on Saturday.

From the Manila airport, the businessman-farmer had gone

'TWAS LIKE/ A20

THE PALACE

RP diplomats join Cory

By Juan A. Ona

(First of two parts)

(The author, a retired ambassador, was the Assistant Minister for European Affairs in the Marcos-era Ministry of Foreign Affairs.)

DURING THE DAYS PRECEDing the defection of Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Fidel Ramos, I had taken to listening to the Church-run Radio Veritas. When Radio Veritas interviewed Ramos and Enrile on Saturday, Feb. 22, I knew something big was happening. I stayed glued to the radio and hardly left my room.

Sunday, February 23

When massive crowds were reported converging on Camp Crame where Enrile and Ramos were holed up, I

RP DIPLOMATS/ A18

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern Luzon will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. Visayas and Eastern Mindanao will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers.

COMPILED BY CYRIL L. BONABENTE, PDI RESEARCH/02/23/06 SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Second FrontPage

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Magdalo denies alliance with Reds

By Marlon Ramos
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

MILITARY CLAIMS OF AN ALLIANCE BETWEEN the renegade Magdalo group of soldiers and the communist rebels were simply far-fetched, according to the lawyer who was arrested with fugitive Army 1st Lt. Lawrence San Juan in Batangas the other day.

Jose Christopher Belmonte said the military claim that the recaptured Magdalo leader had met with leaders of the communist New People's Army shortly before their arrest was a case of "Red-baiting" to discredit the rebel soldiers.

In a statement sent to the INQUIRER yesterday, the Magdalo group said the alleged Magdalo-Communist Party of the Philippines tie-up was mere government "propaganda" to divert the public's attention away from President Macapagal-Arroyo's alleged "high crime."

Air Force Capt. Segundino Orfiano Jr., who signed the statement, said he and the Magdalo members continued to believe in democracy, which was why they were against Ms Arroyo who, he said, had "bastardized" the country's democratic institutions with her alleged rigging of the 2004 elections.

"This is a Cold War mentality, black propaganda. They are trying to pit the Left against the government which should not be the case," Belmonte said shortly before his release yesterday.

Judge Myla Olan of the Padre Garcia municipal court ordered the release of Belmonte and Albert Guyal after their lawyer posted bail.

The two were charged with violation of Presidential Decree 1829, for harboring a criminal, after they were arrested with San Juan on board a van at a checkpoint in Barangay San Felipe, Padre Garcia early Tuesday.

San Juan was one of four Magdalo leaders who escaped from detention in Fort Bonifacio on Jan. 17 while on trial for the Oakwood mutiny of July 2003.

Military and police authorities claimed that Belmonte and Guyal were active NPA members who were with San Juan in a conference with senior Communist Party of the Philippines leaders at a mango farm in Barangay Bucal.

They said the capture of the fugitive Magdalo leader inside what they said was a communist hideout showed that the rebel soldiers had formed an alliance with the communists to topple the Arroyo administration.

Belmonte denied that he was an NPA member although he admitted that he used to belong to the Alex Boncayao Brigade, the urban-based liquidation squad of the CPP in the late 1980s.

He said he joined the NPA at the height of the movement against the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

"I'm not an NPA … I was just a lawyer doing his duty to his client. I admit (being an NPA in the) past and I'm proud of my background," he said.

He also said he considered Arturo Tabara, a leader of a breakaway faction of the CPP, "a father, a brother and a close friend."

He argued that his affiliation with the "Rejectionist" faction of the CPP would made it impossible for him to align himself with current "Reaffirmist" mainstream of the party.

Belmonte, a son of the younger brother of Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, is part of the defense team of the Magdalo soldiers who launched the failed coup at the Oakwood Premiere Hotel in Makati in July 2003.

He claimed to have gone to Padre Garcia to pick up San Juan after the fugitive phoned him on Monday night.

He said San Juan was waiting for him "at a dirt road somewhere in Padre Garcia" at around 5 a.m.

While negotiating the road towards Lipa City, Belmonte said they got lost. He said they found Guyal walking near a market and asked him for directions.

Belmonte said they invited Guyal to ride with them after the latter told them that he was going to Lipa.

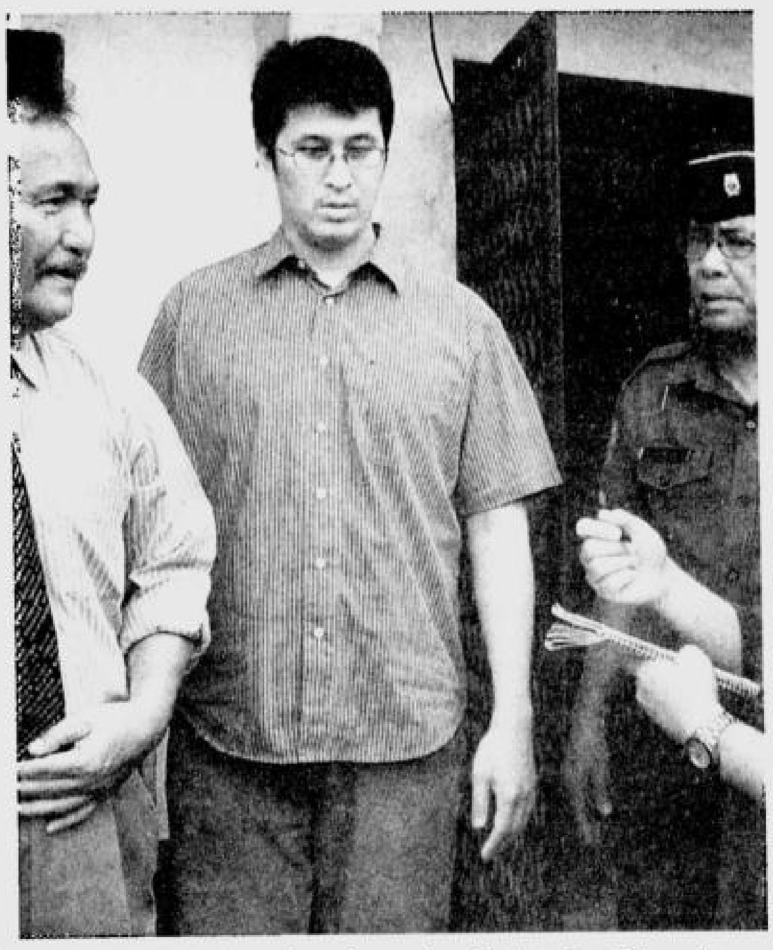
"But after I turned right on a nearby corner, there was the checkpoint and we were arrested," he said.

Guyal said he was just helping Belmonte find his way out of Padre Garcia.

He admitted that he was not a resident of the town and had gone there to look for a job.

Military officials yesterday condemned the alleged Magdalo alliance with the communists as an act of treason and an insult to the country's soldiery.

"This is an insult to our fallen comrades … By law this is treason against the republic as they are now sleeping with the enemy," said Army chief Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon. *With Nikko Dizon and Christine Avendaño*



FREE ON BAIL. Police release lawyer Jose Christopher Belmonte (center) after he posted bail of P12,000 at the Municipal Trial Court in Padre Garcia, Batangas, yesterday. Belmonte, who was arrested along with renegade Lt. Lawrence San Juan last Monday, faces a charge of harboring a wanted person. MARLON RAMOS/PDI SOUTHERN LUZON

PSG tightens security around Palace

By Christine O. Avendaño

THE PRESIDENTIAL SECURITY Group has tightened security around Malacañang after it was rocked by an explosion on Monday, triggering fresh rumors of a power grab against the Arroyo administration.

Since Monday's explosion in front of the Radio Television Malacañang office, the PSG has deployed additional personnel to man the gates of the Palace as well as the gate to Mabini and Kalayaan halls.

The heightened security has made entering the Palace a long and tedious experience, as PSG personnel scrutinize vehicles and the belongings of passengers.

Aside from additional guards, PSG men continue to patrol the compound with bomb sniffing dogs.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita asked for cooperation and understanding for the inconvenience. "We don't want to be caught offguard," he said.

Ermita said the Palace was taking seriously rumors of new coup attempts.

"We're not discounting anything. We're not taking anything for granted," he said, adding that security around Malacañang would be tightened "for as long as it takes.

A group calling itself the Young Officers' Union New Generation (YOUNG) had claimed responsibility for Monday's blast. It claimed to have planted more bombs in the area.

At his weekly news conference, Ermita also said authorities had an idea who were behind the group.

"We have an idea… but it's not for me to say who they are because that's another story," Ermita said.

"Somebody wrote something about Operation Hackle and that's one of the reasons why we think we have an idea who might be involved."

He said the authorities were able to get hold of the plans, including the telephone numbers, the residences and the cell numbers of those involved in the plot.

Ermita said the Palace was still waiting for the National Bureau of Investigation to hand in its final report on Monday's blast.

Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor had blamed the explosion on the chemical reaction between lacquer thinner and a lit object inside a trash bin.

Ermita said he did not have any idea if the NBI was testing the debris collected by the PSG.

Asked to comment on reports that Monday's explosion had been "stage-managed" by the Palace to preempt yesterday's huge protest rallies in commemoration of the 20th anniversary of People Power I, Ermita said: "They can think what they can think."

"I can tell you there is no such thing as stage-managed incidents," he said.

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Cebu Pacific to test Naia 3

CEBU PACIFIC AIR, the country's second flag carrier, has agreed to use the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 for a test run, making it the first airline to utilize the controversial facility, the Manila International Airport Authority announced yesterday.

Airport officials gave Cebu Pacific executives, led by its president and chief executive officer Lance Gokongwei, a walk through at Naia 3 earlier this week to check the terminal's systems and facilities, the Miaa said in a statement.

According to Miaa, "the ocular inspection was in preparation for the planned technical run and rolling operation of Naia Terminal 3 at the end of the first quarter of 2006 if there will be no legal impediments."

It did not give a precise date or indicate how long Cebu Pacific's test would last before the terminal is opened to other airlines. Miaa said last month that it was rushing the installation of various facilities and aiming for a start-up by March 31

Nikko Dizon

Jaworski files graft raps vs Pasig mayor

By Nelson F. Flores and Norman Bordadora

REP. ROBERT "DODOT" JAWORSKI Jr. yesterday filed graft and other charges against Pasig City Mayor Vicente Eusebio for his failure to prevent the establishment and operation of a complex of drug dens in the city and his allegedly whimsical decision to demolish the compound after police raided the "shabu" haven.

Jaworski, who represents the city in the House of Representatives, said in his complaint to the Ombudsman that Eusebio "committed unreasonable and unfair acts and omissions, in an arbitrary and whimsical manner" when he destroyed the shabu arcade five days after it was raided by police and antidrug agents.

He said the mayor's action caused the destruction of evidence against more than 300 people arrested during the Feb. 10 raid in the compound in Barangay Sto. Tomas.

Jaworski specifically accused Eusebio of violating Republic Act No. 3019 (Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act), RA No. 6713 (Code of Ethics for Public Officials) and RA7 No. 160 (Local Government Code).

Eusebio has denied the charges and threatened to file a libel suit against Jaworski.

"Why the drug compound was able to operate within a distance which is literally a stone's throw away from City Hall is inconceivable. It is a clear indication that (Eusebio) has been grossly deficient and remiss in his duties as mayor of Pasig City," Jaworski's affidavit said.

He asked the Ombudsman to place Eusebio under preventive suspension for six months "to prevent him from doing more damage" to the police's case against the suspected drug den operators.

"The motive of the mayor, in ordering the destruction of evidence, his gross deficiency in the performance of his functions, and his arrogance by which he exercises his power, are only known to him," Jaworski said.

Jaworksi attached to his complaint a letter from Director Marcelo Ele Jr. of the PNP's Anti-Illegal Drugs Special Operations Task Force to Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez and Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez lamenting Eusebio's decision to destroy the shabu market. The letter said the complex should have been preserved to protect the evidence.

Fernando, Eusebio added to 'Wowowee' liability list

By Armand N. Nocum

A SPECIAL DEPARTMENT OF Justice panel has added Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando and Pasig City Mayor Vicente Eusebio to an expanded list of more than two dozen people who may be criminally and administratively liable for the "Wowowee" stampede that killed 71 people on Feb. 4.

The four-member panel led by Senior State Prosecutor Joselita de Claro-Mendoza said others who could be prosecuted for the stampede included Philippine Sports Commission Chair William Ramirez, "Wowowee hosts," police officials, security personnel and barangay officials.

Although it made a reference to "Wowowee hosts" among those liable for prosecution, the panel did not specifically cite Willie Revillame, the noontime show's main host, anywhere in its 38-page report.

The panel said the report submitted by Task Force Ultra headed by Interior Undersecretary Marius Corpus was not sufficient ground for a criminal preliminary investigation. It turned over its evaluation report to the Bureau of National Investigation.

"The panel finds that there is a need for the NBI to conduct further investigation on those persons who may be held, criminally and/or administratively, liable for the Ultra incident…," the report said.

The report said ABS-CBN and Wowowee game show officials who may be held liable for the stampede included Rene Luspo, vice president and head of security; Morly Nueva, executive producer-manager; Marilou Almaden, production manager and business unit head; Harold James Nueva, associate producer; Rey D.G. Cayabyab, associate location manager; Mel Feliciano and other staff members; and a Wowowee location manager whose identity had yet to be ascertained.

On the part of the Pasig police, those recommended for investigation were Sr. Supt. Raul Medina, chief of Pasig City police; Sr. Insp. Henry Asuela, precinct commander; Insp. Khadaffy Bitor, chief traffic and parking management office, and police personnel deployed at the Philsports Arena (formerly Ultra) at the time of the stampede.

CBCP backs repeal of death penalty

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONference of the Philippines yesterday praised President Macapagal-Arroyo's assertion she would work for the scrapping of the death penalty law.

The CBCP's Episcopal Commission on Prison Pastoral Care (ECPPC) said in a statement it "receives with enthusiasm" the President's stand on capital punishment.

"We laud the signaled decision. It seems that we have finally regained our senses, for we have abolished the death penalty law before only to reinstate it and make our country one of the few that still adopt[s] the execution of life as an ultimate punishment," Puerto Princesa Bishop Pedro Arigo, ECPPC chair, said.

The Death Penalty Law was abolished in 1987 but was revived in 1993. In 1996, it was amended to make lethal injection the form of execution.

Her decision to push for repeal of the law, Ms Arroyo said, was based on her Catholic beliefs and not on her desire to get on the good side of the Catholic bishops.

Joining the CBCP in welcoming the President's announcement were the International Commission on Prison Pastoral Care (ICCPPC) and the Coalition Against Death Penalty (CADC).

"The ICCPPC firmly believes in the capacity of the human being to transform and reform its behavior," said Rodolfo Diamante, its Asia-Oceania representative, in a statement.

Fr. Silvino Borres Jr., CADC president, said the President's decision befits a nation that believes in God and is a modern civilized state.

"In seeking the abolition of capital punishment, the President is declaring that in pursuing justice one need not yield to vengeance and barbarism," Borres said.

Some senators, however, met President Arroyo's announcement with skepticism.

Administration Sen. Manny Villar had expected the President to issue such a statement.

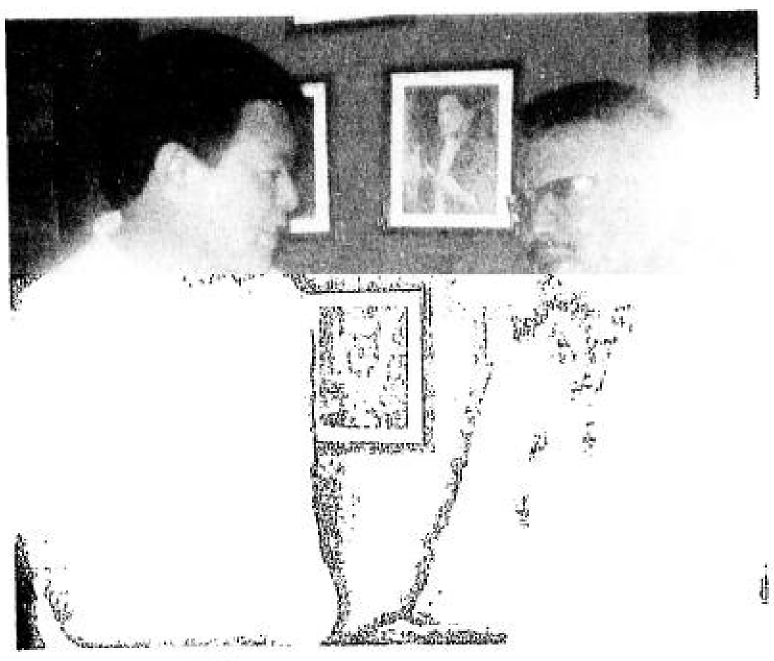
"To each his own motive. I think that's for her own benefit. Whatever happens, there'll be no death penalty," he told reporters. "Eventually she won't be affected by it."

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon said he couldn't believe anything Ms Arroyo said after she ran for President in 2004 when she had declared on Dec. 30, 2002, that she was not going to run.

"Whatever she's saying, whatever she's doing is subject to scrutiny because of the track record of changing her mind," he said.

Both men, however, said they would support a bill repealing the death penalty.

Addressing the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines on Tuesday, the President said she was in favor of repealing the death penalty law and would certify as urgent any bill that would be filed geared toward this. *With TJ Burgonio*



FRIENDS NOW?
Sen. Manny Villar paid a surprise visit on former President Joseph Estrada at the latter's detention estate in Tanay, Rizal, on Monday. It was Villar who railroaded the impeachment complaint against Estrada through the House of Representatives in 2000, which sparked the events that eventually led to Estrada's ouster.

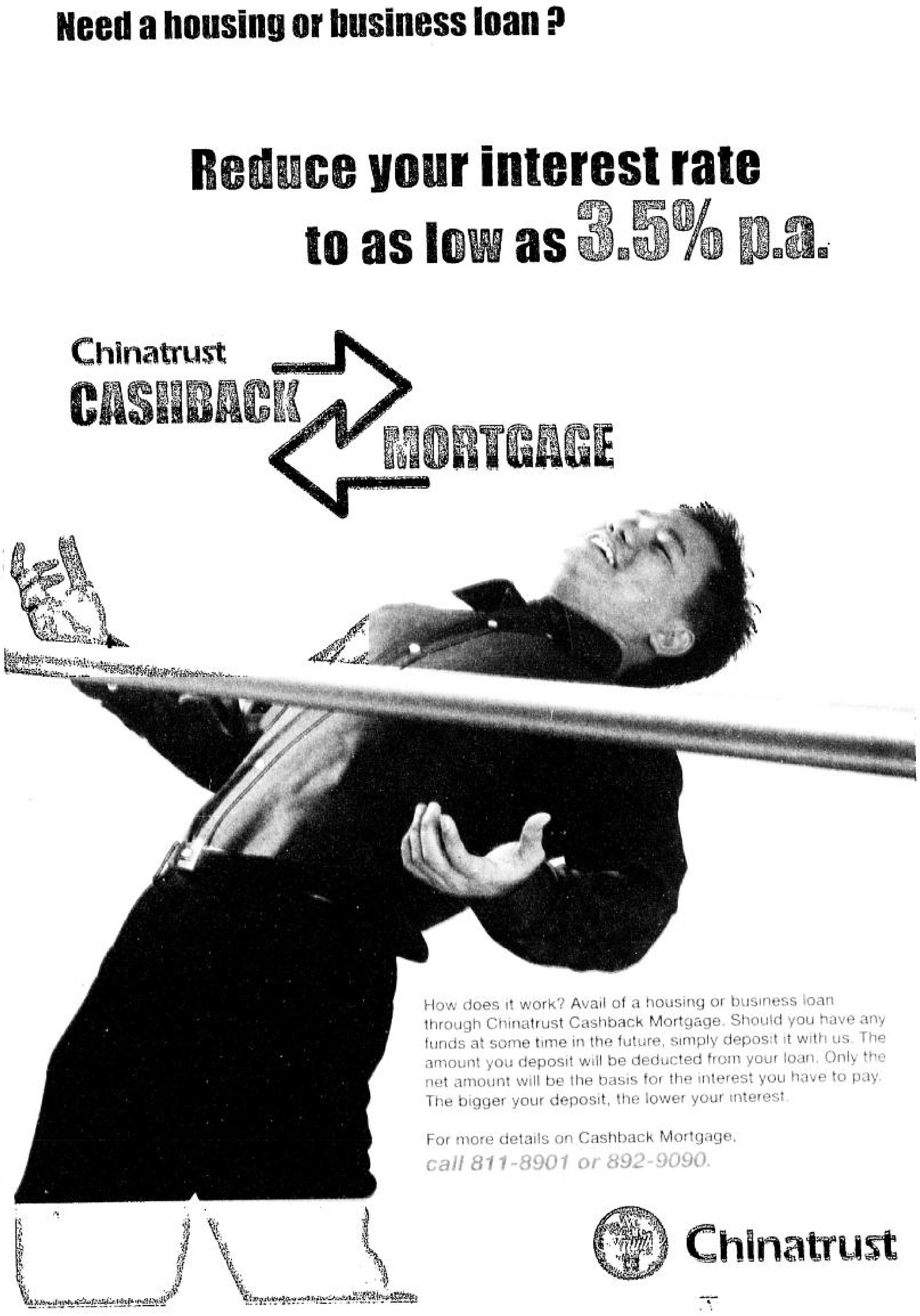
Misuari furlough extended

JAILED MORO LEADER Nur Misuari and his spiritual adviser, who is his co-accused on rebellion charges, will be free for 10 more days after a Makati City court granted yet another extension of their hospital confinement.

In an order issued Tuesday afternoon, Makati Regional Trial Court Judge Sixto Marella Jr. of Branch 138 approved Misuari's extended hospital stay, which was supposed to end yesterday.

Misuari, former governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), and Ustadz Abuharis Usman could thus stay at St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City until March 4. Their confinement began on Jan. 28.

The judge had earlier granted Misuari's appeal for a reinvestigation of the rebellion charges filed against him and seven others for their alleged role in the 2001 Jolo uprising where some 100 people were killed. *Tarra V. Quismundo*



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Imelda pops up in Guinsaugon, upstages Gloria

By Jani Arnaiz
PDI Visayas Bureau

GUINSAUGON, ST. BERNARD, Southern Leyte—Trust Imelda Marcos to be her "Imeldific" self even in the direst of situations.

The former first lady yesterday took everyone by surprise when she showed up at the Guinsaugon command center at around 11:40 a.m.

She was accompanied by an entourage of eight, including one who held an umbrella aloft, shielding her from the scorching sun.

Imelda, a native of neighboring Leyte province, arrived just as President Macapagal-Arroyo was preparing to leave the area.

There were many contrasts in the visit of the two women. And the ironies were not lost on those present.

The widow of the strongman Ferdinand Marcos walked the 400-by-400-meter stretch from the designated parking area at the national highway to the command center of the search-and-rescue operations.

The President arrived on board a helicopter at 10:45 a.m.

The reception for her included a welcome ceremony with Filipino and American soldiers and foreign rescue volunteers lined up to "meet" her. There was also a briefing, as well as a meeting between her and some of the survivors.

But local officials and those in charge of the rescue efforts largely ignored Imelda and her party.

The President met with survivors, rescue workers and Gov. Rosette Lerias for about one hour for an update on the massive international rescue operation.

But as her helicopter was about to take off, Imelda pushed her way past local officials and mud-splattered rescue workers to speak with her, Agence France-Press reported.

The pilot had to reduce the rotor speed as Imelda briefly talked with the President before the latter departed. Their words could not be heard, AFP reported.

Contrasting outfits

Even the way the two women were dressed was a study in contrasts.

The President wore a simple blue pantsuit.

Imelda, looking like she was on her way to a soiree, was attired in black slacks and a Filipiniana-inspired black top with blue prints on the shoulder.

Imelda said she came to Guinsaugon to express her sympathy to the victims of the landslide. "I am sorry my visit was delayed because I was supposed to go to Hong Kong for medical help. But when I saw this [on TV], I postponed and canceled it," she said.

She also said that while she had her own problem, "it is nothing compared with the people's problem."

"I am here for them first. Leyteños before Imelda," she added.

Imelda said she wanted to see the extent of the devastation so she would be armed with firsthand knowledge when she went about asking for donations.

She would not say what kind of help she intended to bring to Guinsaugon, but said she believed her friends would support her.

"My support is small in comparison, but you can be sure I'll be there for whatever is needed," she said, adding:

"Leytenos are very lucky because everyone is here. The President is here. Many countries in the Asean are here. Everybody is coming to give their support. The show of support is very touching."

When asked to comment on Ms Arroyo's visit, Imelda said: "She has been active not only here. Things like this, a natural disaster, I really have to give it to her because she is always there when needed."

Imelda said her group had traveled by land from Tacloban City. She said it took them six-and-a-half hours to reach Guinsaugon.

"The last time I was here was [in the 1970s during] the inauguration of the Maharlika Highway, which was the project of the President [Marcos]," she said.

"Seeing it now and the disaster that has destroyed it makes me sad. But I know that with the help of everybody, all Filipinos united for all, we will prevail," she said.

Shortly before she left for Guinsaugon—her first time to visit the site of the tragedy—Ms Arroyo received a total of P14 million in donations for the landslide victims.

Thai Ambassador Asha Dvitiyananda turned over a check worth P5 million, and the Korean construction firm Han Jin Heavy Industries and Construction Co. Industries, represented by its director and general manager, Jong Sup Shim, and Rep. Monico Puentevella, a check of P8 million.

The Metrobank Foundation, represented by its executive vice president and executive director, Aniceto Sobrepena, also handed to the President a check worth P1 million. ***With reports from Nikko Dizon, Luige A. del Puerto and Gil Cabacungan Jr. in Manila***

Chicken revives flagging spirits; 15 bodies dug up yesterday

From page A1

meters deep, had cracked into a structure, or what was left of it, in the ravaged barangay.

But Ramos said that in all likelihood, the structure was not part of the Guinsaugon Elementary School, where more than 200 pupils and teachers were believed to have been buried alive in the avalanche of mud and boulders on Feb. 17.

Ramos said the structure was in a relatively "shallow" portion of the tragedy site, quite far from where the school once stood.

The spot is now marked with a flag to guide rescuers.

He said the textbooks found inside were "religious" in nature, indicating that they belonged, not in a school, but to a family of Iglesia ni Cristo followers.

As of yesterday, Ramos said, seismic sensors were picking up "rhythmic patterns" from underneath the muck.

But these were not enough to suggest the presence of human activity, he said.

Fifteen bodies were dug up yesterday bringing to 111 the number of fatalities so far, and 11 body parts.

On Tuesday, some rescuers were quoted as saying that it was time to concede that there were no more human survivors.

Abdul Asis Ahmad, head of the 67-member Malaysian team, yesterday said a person buried under mud normally lived up to 10 days at most.

The time frame in the case of the Guinsaugon tragedy might be even less given the intensity of the landslide, he said.

"But we will still continue the mission until the Philippines halts the operation," he told reporters.

Southern Leyte Gov. Rosette Lerias yesterday said she was not calling off search-and-rescue operations to focus on search and retrieval.

Capt. Burrell Parmer, spokesperson for the US rescue contingent, said the governor had the final say on the course of the operations.

Lerias told the INQUIRER at around 4 p.m. yesterday that she would decide based on the recommendation of "skilled rescuers" on the ground.

"If they say it's a go, it's a go," she said, noting that this was the recommendation when she met with a team of experts from the United States, Malaysia, the University of the Philippines and Ateneo Tuesday night.

"Life is too precious," she said. "Whether we find life or not, it's in God's hands."

The INQUIRER saw at least eight body bags being carried one by one by US soldiers from the digging site to an area across the Lawigan River.

Picking up on the governor's optimism, American rescuers rented a two-ton drill capable of digging 180 feet. Parmer said the equipment was secured from a private firm in Manila.

Rescuers yesterday had yet to breach the 30-meter depth believed to be an approximation of the volume of mud and boulders that covered Guinsaugon.

Parmer said the Accer Rotary Rig skid-mounted drill would speed up the operation because it also had a mud pump.

The Americans also brought in fresh legs to join the rescue operation involving Philippine authorities and teams from Taiwan, Malaysia and Spain.

Parmer said the Gulf Company, which had been on site since Saturday, had been replaced by another group of around 200 soldiers from the USS Essex docked nearby.

"We are working extremely hard. We hope to see the possibility of any life we can recover," said Gen. Martin Robeson, commander of the 3rd US Marine Expeditionary Force based in Okinawa, Japan.

"I believe there is still hope. We will continue to work just as hard today as we did on Day One. From the very beginning, we are taking the approach that we are going to work as if [the victims] are our family that are buried," Robeson told reporters at the Marriott Hotel in Cebu City.

Robeson said they would go on searching for survivors "until the Philippine government says it is time to stop."

"As long as the American Red Cross, USAID (United States Agency for International Development) and the Philippine government say there is a need, we will stay to help," he added.

Like family

Although they had pinpointed the school's location, Robeson said, they had not been successful in getting into it.

Robeson recalled being overwhelmed by the devastation when he first set foot on Guinsaugon on Sunday.

"My first thought was, 'What if this is my family?'" said Robeson, who has four children and two grandchildren in the United States.

"It is just overwhelming to see over 900 people missing and buried under the mudslide. But what it gave me was a deep commitment to put every ounce of energy we can to help in finding even one survivor," he said.

'Where's God? . . .

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ga volunteer, a young man who had lost most of the members of his family to the landslide shouted at the top of his voice in the native tongue: "I don't believe in God anymore. Why did He take away our loved ones, the old and the young?"

Meaning in tragedy

The outburst triggered loud cries from those present, prompting the priest, Fr. Conrado Saavedra, to suspend the Mass and allow everyone to release their rage and sorrow.

"We sort of panicked because everyone was crying. The sisters and most of the volunteers also started to cry," said the Gawad Kalinga volunteer who asked not to be named.

He said those present might have been touched earlier by the homily of Saavedra, parish priest of the nearby town of San Juan, who spoke of finding meaning in the tragedy.

The Mass was celebrated at the evacuation center in the Christo Rey Regional High School in this town, where most of the Guinsaugon survivors are being housed.

Trauma

Many survivors of Friday's killer mudslide are suffering from post-traumatic anxiety disorder, Social Welfare Secretary Esperanza Cabral said yesterday in Cebu City.

She said 20 social workers were providing psychosocial support apart from material support to those who had been injured or who lost loved ones in the mudslide.

"They are still apprehensive. They have a sense of fear that it might happen again, and we are trying to allay that fear ... We try to reassure them," Cabral told the INQUIRER.

Those seriously affected by the trauma would be referred by the social workers to psychiatrists at the Department of Health, she said.

Cabral said some of the victims were showing signs of their emotional burden, with a number of them shaking, unable to sleep, or afflicted by headaches.

Others keep crying because they remember their loved ones who died or are still missing, and orphaned children continue to look for their mothers, she said.

"Those are natural stress reactions," Cabral said.

But there is one thing they share in common, she said: "They all fear any movement of the ground."

Cabral said her team would continue to provide help "as long as necessary."

She said children were more difficult to treat because they could not fully express their emotions.

Cabral, along with Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya Jr. and Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes were in Cebu to take their oath of office at Malacañang sa Sugbo.

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1.6 GS AT	815,000	70,000	43,182	34,156	24,334	19,514	17,114	435,000	8,150
1.8 GT AT	908,000	136,200	48,109	38,053	27,110	21,741	19,067	500,000	8,000
200	1,140,000	110,000	60,402	47,776	34,037	27,296	23,939	600,000	11,400
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FVR ridicules GMA 'best person' claim

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marillo at the Glorietta in Makati City.

Asked if he shared the President's opinion, Ramos smiled and said wryly : "How do you know she agrees with herself?"

Asked for her opinion on the matter, Aquino said, "No comment."

Ramos and Aquino, both key players in the 1986 People Power, have avoided celebrating the 20th anniversary of the event with Ms Arroyo.

Aquino will attend the Microenterprise Stakeholders' Conference today in Makati to celebrate the event with her pet project—microfinancing.

Ramos declined an invitation from Malacañang to attend the celebration except for the traditional early-morning flag-raising on Feb. 25 at the People Power Monument on Edsa.

"I declined because the President is there. But on Feb. 25, I'll be there. Why will I be there? Because the President is not there," Ramos said.

Franchise

Asked if Ms Arroyo was avoiding him and vice versa, Ramos said, "It's not me that she's avoiding. She's avoiding some others. I'll be there on the 25th. Isn't she the one who won't be there?"

In a speech to the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines Wednesday, Ms Arroyo sniped at the "people who parlayed their presence on Edsa a long time ago into a lifetime franchise of working against administrations whose leaders did not curtsy before them."

Asked if he felt alluded to, Ramos said, "The people of the Philippines hold the franchise for that."

Asked why the gains of Edsa I had not been sustained 20 years later, "That's not the fault of our people. That's the fault of our elected leaders."

Muhammad Ali

In the Senate, Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. described as boastful and outrageous Ms Arroyo's claim that she was the best person to lead the country during the transition to a parliamentary system.

"Unlike Muhammad Ali who said he was the best heavyweight boxer in the world and proved it by his prowess in the ring, Gloria cannot prove even the legitimacy of her election in 2004," he said.

Senate President Franklin Drilon said Ms Arroyo's "self-assessment" was not factual as shown by the results of Pulse Asia and Social Weather Stations surveys, which put her net public approval rating at negative 30.

"Isn't it that in a private company, an employee's self-assessment is submitted to the supervisor. Here, the supervisor is the public and I think the rater and the ratee do not agree," Drilon said.

Restiveness in military

Pimentel pointed out that the last quarterly survey of the SWS showed that a majority of the respondents wanted her to resign.

"If Ms Arroyo believes that she is the best person to lead the country, why is her administration mired in all kinds of scandals that have alienated the citizens and undermined the confidence of investors," Pimentel said.

"Why is she blocking congressional investigation of these scandals and anomalies?"

And if the President were doing well on her job, Pimentel asked why "there is so much restiveness in the military while the communist insurgency is becoming a more serious problem."

Praising herself

In the House of Representatives, Minority Leader Francis Escudero said he pitied Ms Arroyo.

"Since nobody is saying it she decided to praise herself instead. It's not only pathetic, it's downright 'hard sell,'" said Escudero who had led a failed impeachment drive against Ms Arroyo last year.

House Deputy Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano, another impeachment proponent, said the President was the "worse person to lead this nation."

"Who is she trying to convince—the people of the universal federation of evil?" asked Cayetano.

The lawmaker said destroying democratic institutions, throwing out transparency and accountability, which are the foundations of good government, were "her claim to infamy."

"Ironically, Edsa I and II were about a moral revolution, hope, love and good government, while President Arroyo's administration is about despair, hate, cheating, lying and stealing," he said. *With reports from Philip C. Tubeza and and Michael Lim Ubac*

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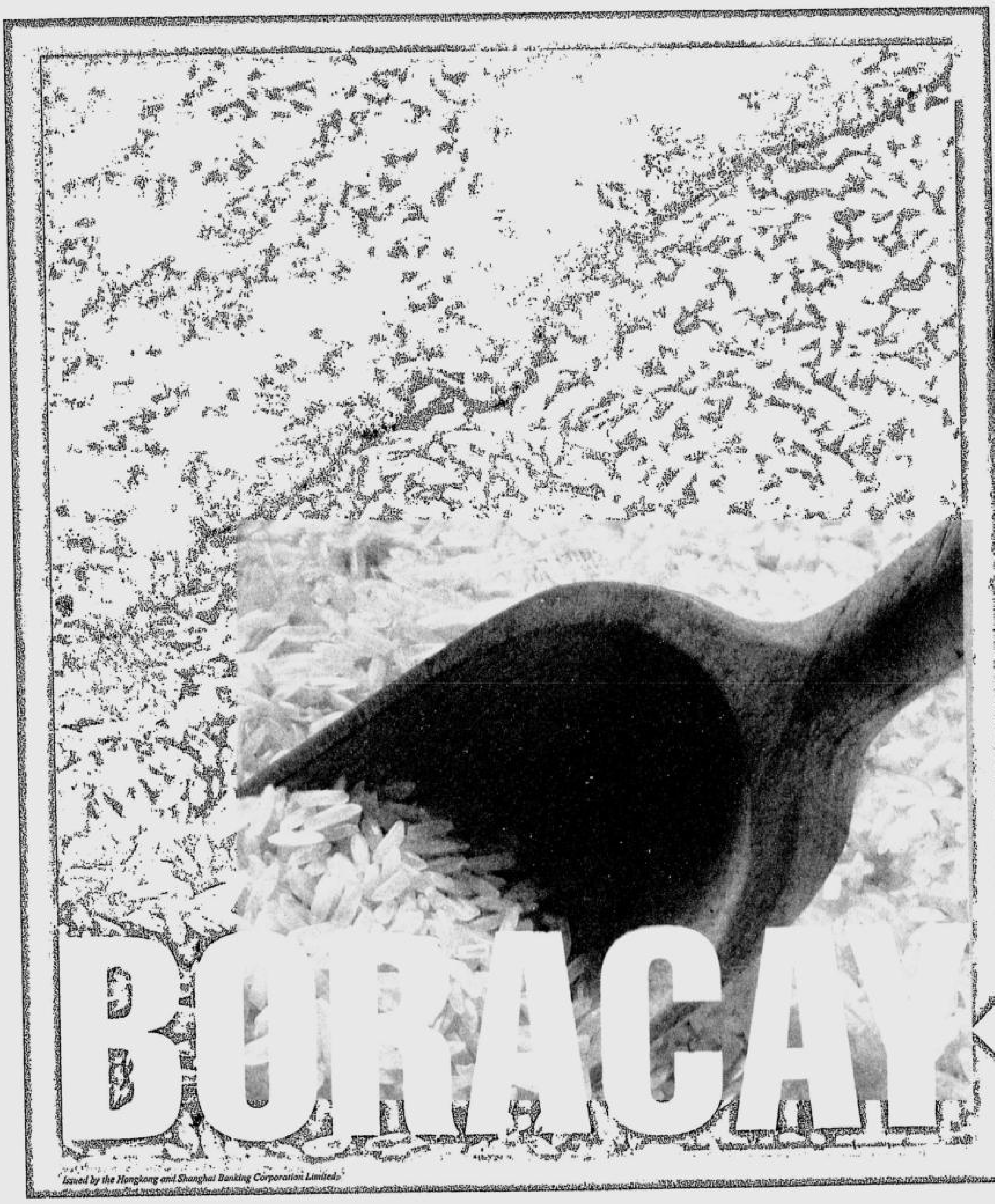
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Power groups act to end political crisis

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The meeting took place amid renewed rumors of disgruntled factions in the Armed Forces of the Philippines organizing fresh plots to unseat President Macapagal-Arroyo. *(Story on this page.)*

Business role

It also coincided with the 20th anniversary of the 1986 "People Power" revolt which ended Ferdinand Marcos' 20-year rule.

Abad said Velarde would have been joined at the meeting by Cardinal Ricardo Vidal but the Catholic Church leader begged off because he was tied up in Cebu.

"The MBC wanted businessmen to get more involved and not leave the resolution of the crisis to politicians alone even in areas of constitutional reform," said Abad. "Businessmen should be heard in this issue, they should have a visible presence."

Abad was a member of the Hyatt 10 group of Cabinet and other high officials who resigned in July last year because of loss of confidence in the President.

'Hello Garci' discussed

Their resignations were triggered by the "Hello Garci" wiretap scandal centered on Ms Arroyo's phone conversations with former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano allegedly involving a conspiracy to rig the results of the 2004 presidential election.

Up to now, Ms Arroyo has refused to identify the election official she said she talked with last year, despite widespread appeals for a full presidential accounting.

The "Hello Garci" controversy was among the issues discussed at the meeting.

"Makakabuti para sa lahat sa atin kung malaman natin ang katotohanan, hindi para lang sa ating mamamayan, kundi para rin sa pangulo natin (It would be good for all if we knew the truth, not just for the people but also for our President)," Aquino said on GMA television.

Not a word from Bro. Mike

MBC Executive Director Guillermo Luz said: "We believe in the search for that truth. We believe everybody has a right to that truth and should seek the truth."

Velarde breathed not a word about what was discussed.

"I do not know. I was just invited to attend the meeting," he told GMA.

Abad said MBC chair Ricardo Romulo presided over the meeting at the Peninsula Hotel which focused on Charter change, electoral reforms and the political crisis triggered by questions on the legitimacy of the Arroyo presidency.

Palace unperturbed

He said the guests felt that it would be unfortunate if the country walked the same path it did 20 years ago, when a military faction led by then Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Fidel Ramos broke away from Ferdinand Marcos and triggered a Church-backed uprising that engulfed the dictatorship.

Abad said the MBC leaders lamented that the things the country fought for 20 years ago with Edsa People Power—specifically truth, freedom, democracy and honest government—were the same things the country was still looking for today.

Malacañang, however, was unperturbed by the MBC meeting.

"We heard about the meeting a few days ago and we think they are just trying to assess the situation in the country," said Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita.

Just the beginning

Abad said that this was just the first of a series of meetings that the MBC planned to hold in order to ensure that the business community had a voice in the debates on the political crisis, Charter change and electoral reforms.

Abad said the guest list included some of his Hyatt 10 colleagues—former Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima, former Trade Secretary Juan Santos and government peace panel chief negotiator Teresita Deles.

Aside from Zobel, Abad said other prominent businessmen at the meeting were former Finance Secretary Ramon del Rosario, former Finance Secretary Roberto de Ocampo, former Finance Secretary Jesus Estanislao, former Finance Secretary Jose T. Pardo and banker Cesar Buenaventura.

"There were other personalities invited but they were busy for the Edsa celebrations," Abad said.

The group held no press conference after the meeting.

Esperon says 14 plotters squealed, hints Gringo suspect

From page A1

secret handshake and underwent a ritual, pricking their forefingers to draw blood and mixing it with red wine in a glass. A dog tag was dipped in the mix before being given to the new member.

The Army chief showed off some of the dog tags that he said had been turned over by officers who had backed out of the group. He also demonstrated their handshake.

Many of the members backed out after learning that some of the coup leaders were forging an alliance with communist guerrillas to topple Ms Arroyo, Esperon said.

Ms Arroyo, who succeeded ousted President Joseph Estrada after a second "people power" revolt in January 2001, survived an impeachment bid in September, when her allies in the House of Representatives used a technicality to block complaints of alleged massive corruption and vote-rigging.

Esperon said junior officers continued to plot against the Commander in Chief after the failed Oakwood mutiny of July 27, 2003.

'Oplan Hackle'

He said the officers "confessed participation and confessed attending conferences since December 2003 and many more conferences in 2004 and 2005 in Makati hotels talking about reorganizing the Magdalo and going into Oplan Hackle."

He said the military discovered that a "final coordinating conference of Oplan Hackle" was held on Jan. 14 in a hotel in Makati that was supposed to be followed by the mass escape of detained Magdalo mutineers.

But only last week Esperon dismissed "Oplan Hackle" as a mere "psy-war propaganda" by rebel soldiers.

Esperon described "Oplan Hackle" as a plot to take over the government through a junta.

He said "Oplan Hackle" was uncovered in December when the military seized a document titled "The Last Revolution," which he said "outlines the bases of operations of these destabilizers toward the establishment of a revolutionary government that will work in what they called a National Recovery Program (NRP)."

Honasan

Curiously, "The Last Revolution" was one of the documents captured from the Oakwood mutineers in 2003. The NRP meanwhile was a development blueprint authored by former Sen. Gregorio Honasan, who was linked to the mutiny.

Honasan was charged with coup d'etat before the Department of Justice but the case has not progressed.

Esperon hinted that Honasan was again suspected of being behind Oplan Hackle. "Well, we are still gathering evidence. We do not want to try people here by publicity. We are gathering evidence so that we could file the charges," he said.

Asked if Honasan was under surveillance, Esperon replied, "As I said we are gathering evidence."

Diverting attention

Honasan yesterday denied involvement in "Oplan Hackle," saying the military was just trying to divert the public's attention away from the controversies that grew out of the "Hello Garci" election fraud scandal.

"That's the tendency now. Everyone seems bent not on calming the situation but covering his tracks, throwing up a smokescreen. Magic is in vogue," Honasan, who was a principal player in the 1986 Edsa I Revolt.

He said there was no such thing as "Operation Hackle."

"I may be old but I cannot be an elder . . . I refuse to be an elder. I think whoever is behind this . . . they are doing this to confuse the issue of poverty, social injustice, political unity, livelihood," Honasan told reporters in Club Filipino yesterday.

He also scored reports that charges would be filed against him once enough evidence had been gathered.

"Before, you built up evidence to warrant a conclusion. Now, you form a conclusion and build up evidence to support the conclusion," he said.

The real enemy

Commodore Rex Robles (ret.), former propagandist of the Reform the AFP Movement (RAM), said Esperon's statement linking Honasan to an alleged coup plot showed that the AFP "does not know its real enemy."

"It's like entering a dark room without a flashlight. They think they have enemies there, so they swing their [clubs] at will," Robles said.

He said it was also "convenient" to link Honasan because "no explanation is required."

"If you mention Honasan, it's not just Honasan, but also coup plotter, destabilizer," Robles said.

"If they know who the enemies are, they should have solved the problem by now. They should have picked up and arrested the real people who should be picked up, not the imagined one," he said.

Never written down

Robles also laughed off reports that the name of Honasan was on a document left behind by 1st Lt. Lawrence San Juan when he escaped from his detention cell last month. San Juan was captured Monday morning in Batangas.

"If San Juan had a list, that means he planned and organized the whole thing by himself, and then conveniently left the document in his locker?" Robles said.

Retired Chief Supt. Vic Batac, who had been described as a "strategist" in the series of coup attempts against the Aquino administration, said coup plots were never "written in black and white as oplans."

"We used codes, but not that way," Batac said. "It's the wrong, badly written script."

Archbishop Rosales, one of 15 new cardinals

From page A1

Mass at the Manila Cathedral.

Rosales, 73, was one of 15 new cardinals announced by the Vatican.

Franco congratulated Rosales, who received a round of applause.

"This is a sign of renewal on the part of the Holy Father, on the part of the Universal Church, and the Church of the Philippines," said Franco.

Rosales is the sixth Filipino to become a prince of the Church and the third still living. The two others are Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal and Emeritus of Rome Jose Cardinal Sanchez.

As a cardinal, a rank just below that of Pope, Rosales will join activities of the College of Cardinals, which include electing a new pope and helping the current Pope govern the flock. Cardinals are addressed as "eminence."

Benedict read aloud the names during his weekly general audience and said they would be elevated during a ceremony at the Vatican on March 24.

12 under 80

Twelve of the 15 men are under the age of 80, and thus eligible to vote in a conclave to select Benedict's successor.

Among the new cardinals is Hong Kong Bishop Joseph Zen and Monsignor Nicolas Cheong-Jin-Suk, the archbishop of Seoul.

Pope Benedict has been reaching out to China and the elevation was an indication that religious freedom is important to the Pontiff.

Benedict also promoted Pope John Paul II's longtime private secretary, Krakow Archbishop Stanislaw Dziwisz.

In addition, he named the archbishop of Boston, Sean O'Malley, who was brought in by John Paul to clean up the archdiocese following the sex abuse scandal that forced the resignation of Cardinal Bernard Law.

Sin's successor

Rosales succeeded Jaime Cardinal Sin as archbishop of Manila on Nov. 21, 2003, the 31st to hold the post.

As an 8-year-old altar boy, Rosales expressed his desire to become a priest in the yearbook of his school, St. Bridget's Academy in Batangas City.

"When I grow up, I will serve God by being faithful to Him. I will say Mass every day and will make the sinners good," he said. "The spreading of our Catholic faith is my primary duty so I will be ready to do the best I can for our dear Lord."

Seven years later, he entered the San Jose Seminary in Manila, despite his lawyer-father's wish that he take up either medicine or law.

On March 23, 1958, 11 years after entering the seminary, Rosales was ordained at the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Batangas City. He served for 12 years as a teacher, spiritual director and rector at the St. Francis Minor and Major Seminaries in Lipa City.

His first stint as a parish priest was in Banaybanay, Lipa, from 1970 to 1972. He then returned to Batangas City to serve as parish priest of the Immaculate Conception Parish until 1974.

He became a bishop on Oct. 28, 1974. He was later installed Auxiliary Bishop of Manila to then Archbishop Sin. Rosales was also appointed parish priest of Antipolo and director of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage.

In 1980, Sin assigned him to the San Carlos Major Seminary in Makati as rector, a position he held for two years.

In September 1982, Rosales was installed as bishop of Malaybalay in Bukidnon. He joined his parishioners at the Department of Energy and Natural Resources office in Manila and fasted for three days to protest the destruction of Bukidnon's forests.

More than a decade later, on March 18, 1993, Rosales was installed as the first Batangueño archbishop of Lipa.

Rosales is a full-blooded Batangueño. He was born on Aug. 10, 1932, the Feast of San Lorenzo, to Batangas City natives Godofredo and Remedios Rosales. He is the third of seven children.

Prior to entering the seminary, "Dency" studied at St. Bridget's, Batangas Elementary School and Batangas High School. *With a report from Cyril L. Bonabente, PDI Research*

In show of force, people relive first day of Edsa I

From page A1

In a massive show of force, members of militant organizations, rural and urban poor groups, and civil society marched on Edsa.

As the crowds waved banners, chanted slogans and sang the beloved protest song "Bayan Ko," the picture was reminiscent of 20 years ago, albeit in much smaller numbers.

Organizers placed the crowd at 25,000, but police gave a much more conservative estimate of 5,000. The INQUIRER estimated at least 15,000 people.

"This is the real people power," said former Social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman. The crowd called for Ms Arroyo's ouster.

The President, who kicked off the four-day commemoration of Edsa I by leading the wreath laying rites at the Libingan ng mga Bayani in Taguig City, has a different concept of People Power.

In her speech before heading to St. Bernard, a town in Southern Leyte hit by a landslide, the President said the nation was reliving the spirit of Edsa "whenever we rush to the side of a neighbor in need, a community in distress or a stranger in despair."

"The spirit of Edsa is alive in St. Bernard where citizens use bare hands to claw the earth to rescue kith and kin," she said.

Over at Camp Crame, a small group of civilians, police officers, and key players of Edsa I converged in the morning at the gate, where they described how military rebels and the people opposed to the Marcos regime "became one" 20 years ago.

They cut a yellow ribbon and shook hands during a short program, a symbol, they said, of the crossing of lines between the armed services and the people and of a time when it became the civilians' turn to protect their soldiers.

"This here is a symbol of the military and the civilian groups uniting (against Ferdinand Marcos)," said Reli German, then a member of the August 21 Movement (Atom), the group formed to protest the assassination of former Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino in 1983.

Members of Atom were among the first to flock to Edsa upon learning that rebel soldiers led by then Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and then Vice Chief of Staff Fidel Ramos had announced their withdrawal of support from Marcos.

Among those who came to Camp Crame yesterday were Enrile, now a senator, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, and Vice President Noli de Castro.

Stopped at NLEx

"It was in that gate that a bloodless revolution started. We were expecting a revolution, and it turned out to be bloodless," said Lou Belen, an Edsa I veteran.

In Pampanga, members of militant groups from Central and Northern Luzon were stopped by policemen from proceeding to the Edsa Shrine to join protests demanding the President's ouster.

Two vans of the People's Pilgrimage for Truth, whose members belong to the party-list group Akbayan and the fisherfolk group Pangisda from La Union and Pangasinan, were stopped at the North Luzon Expressway (NLEx) gate in Barangay Dau in Mabalacat, Pampanga.

Pablo Rosales, Pangisda chair, said the police ordered the protesters to return to their provinces and escorted them as far as the Tarlac boundary of the MacArthur Highway.

Lament

The police cited violations that included the vehicles' plying outside routes stated in their franchises.

Aurora Broquil, chair of the Kilusan para sa Pambansang Demokrasya (KPD), said their members aboard four jeepneys in Meycauayan town, two jeepneys in Pulilan town and two jeepneys in Tabang, all in the Bulacan side of the NLEx, were blocked by the police.

At Edsa, the demonstrators almost never reached their destination as several police lines blocked them just in front of the Santolan flyover.

Rally permit

At least three police trucks, a fire truck, and a police car blocked all but one lane on southbound Edsa. The police demanded a permit from the demonstrators, who insisted they did not need one since People Power Monument was a freedom park.

"It's Edsa I anniversary and we can't go to People Power Monument," Akbayan Rep. Risa Hontiveros-Baraquel told the police during the negotiation.

After the hourlong negotiation, the police finally allowed the demonstrators to proceed.

Traffic was snarled for hours.

Sanlakas president Wilson Fortaleza said the administration was the "antithesis" of the real meaning of Edsa and people power.

"Twenty years after Edsa, the Filipino is deeper in debt, poorer and hungrier," said Freedom from Debt Coalition president Ana Maria Nemenzo.

Laban ng Masa chair Francisco Nemenzo Jr. said the people should lament, not celebrate, the anniversary of people power. He said the uprising ended in the "takeover of another section of the elite." *With reports from Christine O. Avendaño in Manila and Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Bird flu spread unprecedented – WHO

GENEVA—INTERNATIONAL HEALTH EXPERTS HAVE expressed concern over the unprecedented spread of bird flu from Asia to Europe and Africa, but said the spotlight is on Indonesia because of its continuing high infection rate among people and poultry.

Fourteen countries—from India to Nigeria and Egypt—have reported their first cases of birds infected with the deadly H5N1 strain of bird flu since the beginning of February, the World Health Organization said.

"It's absolutely unprecedented," WHO spokesperson Maria Cheng told The Associated Press on Tuesday. "We've never seen so many outbreaks of the same virus in so many different regions, and our concern obviously is that humans could potentially come into contact with birds infected with H5N1, which would mean populations worldwide are potentially at risk."

WHO says it remains difficult for humans to catch H5N1. The agency has confirmed 170 human cases, including 92 deaths, since 2003—mostly in east Asia. But WHO experts fear that the virus could mutate into a form that is easily transmitted from person to person, and that could set off a flu pandemic.

Many of the locations of recent outbreaks were in Europe, where wild birds have tested positive for the disease. But poultry cases in India, Egypt and Nigeria are causing international health authorities more concern because of the close contact chickens and other domestic fowl can have with humans who keep them around their homes, increasing the chance of the disease jumping the species barrier.

"At the moment we don't have very good information about how extensive these outbreaks are," said Cheng. "Certainly cases like India and Egypt where population density is quite high and people tend to keep birds at home, that's a concern."

But so far, she noted, there have been no human cases reported in those countries or in Nigeria nor in any of the western European countries.

WHO said the 14 countries that have had outbreaks since the beginning of February—in order of reporting—are Iraq, Nigeria, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Slovenia, Iran, Austria, Germany, Egypt, India, France, and Hungary. A 15th country, Malaysia, on Monday reported a fresh outbreak in poultry after having been considered free of the disease for more than a year.

But Indonesia is a concern because of the high infection rates among birds and people.

"The more chances H5N1 has to infect people, the more chances it has to evolve into a form that could spark a pandemic," Cheng said. "And the place we're seeing the most human infections right now is Indonesia."

H5N1 is widespread among domestic poultry in Indonesia, and the country has record 26 human cases since July, including 19 deaths, Cheng said.

"That's quite a large number," she said.

The most recent Indonesian human death was confirmed Monday.

Juan Lubroth, head of the infectious disease group at the UN's Rome-based Food and Agriculture Organization, said, he was concerned about outbreaks in Africa, but "I do not want to lose focus on the situation that we have in Indonesia. There is a national strategy in Indonesia. Now we just have to implement it."

Vietnam has the highest number of confirmed human cases of H5N1 since 2003, with 93 people infected and 42 deaths. None of Vietnam's cases have been this year. Indonesia is in second place overall, followed by Thailand with 22 cases and 14 deaths; China, 12 and 8; Turkey 12 and 4; Cambodia 4 and 4; and Iraq 1 and 1.

Lubroth was reached by telephone in Egypt, where he had gone to help contain the outbreak among poultry there. The country, as well as Nigeria and its neighbors in West Africa, were also of concern to him, he said. *AP*

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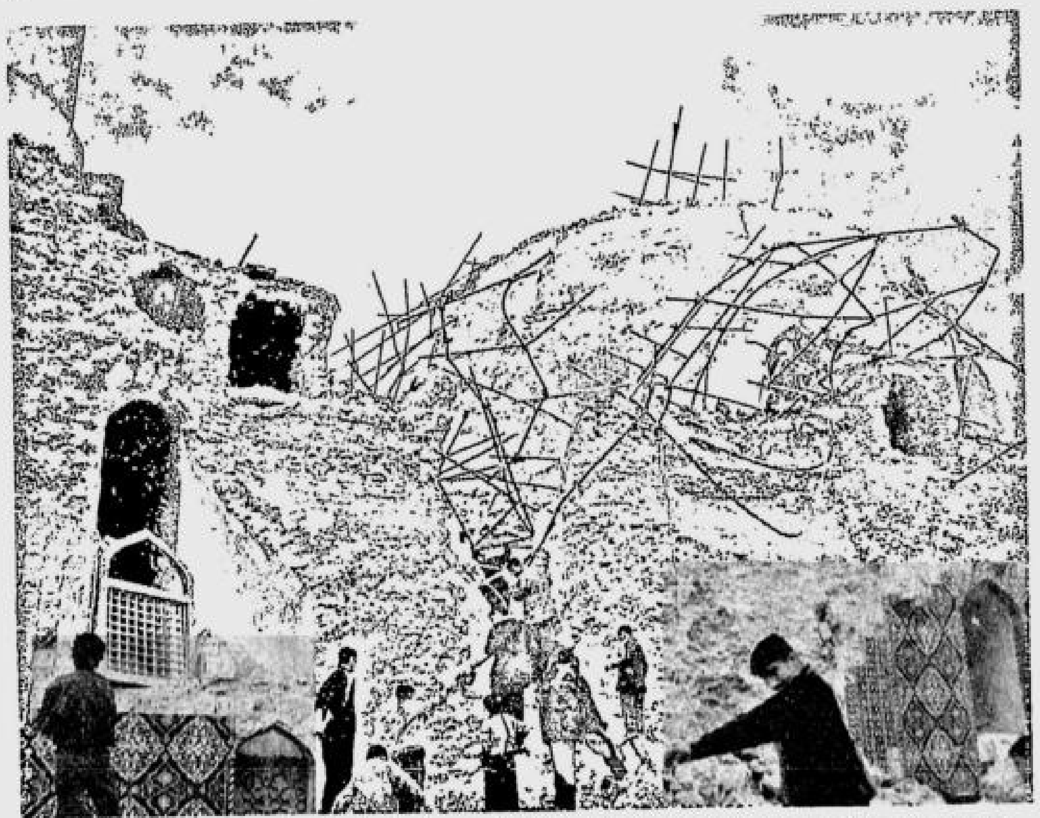

IRAQIS inspect the bombed holy shrine of al-Hadi in the Iraqi northern city of Samarra, Feb. 22. Bombers struck a celebrated Shiite mausoleum in Samarra, north of Baghdad, bringing down part of its celebrated golden dome, police said. AFP

21 killed in Baghdad market blast

BAGHDAD—AT LEAST 21 PEOPLE WERE killed and 27 wounded late Tuesday when a car bomb ripped a busy, mainly Shiite market in southern Baghdad, police said.

The attack, which bore the hallmarks of previous strikes by Sunni extremists who have declared war on Shiites, followed a spate of bombings around the capital Monday targeting the religious group, which makes up 60 percent of Iraq's population.

It came as Iraqi political factions—based along religious and ethnic lines—bicker over the make-up of the next government in the wake of the Shiite-based United Iraqi Alliance's victory in December national elections.

Dura, a mixed Shiite-Sunni community, has been torn apart by sectarian violence over the past year.

The latest deaths brought to 30 the number of people killed Tuesday in violence across Iraq.

Those dead included three Iraqi security officials killed by bombings in Baghdad; three Iraqi soldiers, one of them a women, shot dead in the northern city of Kirkuk; two civilians shot dead in a taxi near Baquba, northeast of the capital; and one truck driver killed in the northern town of Baiji.

On Monday, one of the bloodiest days in recent weeks, at least 23 Iraqis were killed in attacks around the country, including a suicide bombing of a mini-bus that killed a dozen people in a Baghdad Shiite neighborhood.

The spike in violence comes as US forces seek to hand over greater responsibility to Iraqi forces for security in the capital.

"Sixty percent of Baghdad's security is now under the control of Iraqi army," US Colonel Mike Beech from the 4th Infantry Division said Monday as his unit handed over an additional 50 sq. km of 'battle space' near the heavily fortified Green Zone.

"This does not mean that American troops will not be seen on the ground in these areas ... but the Iraqi army is capable more than the coalition forces of handling the security of the areas that it has taken over," Beech said.

In other developments, Jordan's Prime Minister Maaruf Bakhit announced Tuesday the release of a Jordanian embassy driver held hostage in Iraq since December.

"The efforts of His Majesty King Abdullah II and his daily follow-up of all state agencies to secure the release of the Jordanian hostage Mahmud Saaidiyat held in Iraq have borne fruit," Bakhit told state-run Petra news agency.

The driver's kidnappers had repeatedly threatened to execute him unless Jordanian authorities released a woman who had failed in a bid to blow herself up last November in a combined suicide attack on hotels in Amman. *AFP*

Cartoon row calming down – Denmark

COPENHAGEN—DENMARK SAID ON TUESday weeks of sometimes violent protests against Danish cartoons of the Prophet Mohammad appeared to be calming down, and world political and religious leaders appealed for tolerance.

At least 50 people have been killed in the protests that have exposed a gulf of misunderstanding between the West which has defended the right of free speech and Muslims who see the cartoons as sacrilegious and an attack on their beliefs.

But with a decrease in the number and intensity of protests in the past few days, Danish Prime Minister Anders Fog Rasmussen expressed hope that his country, had weathered the worst of the storm. "It is my impression that the development during the last few days has gone in the direction of more subdued demonstrations and statements in large parts of the Muslim world," said Rasmussen. *Reuters*

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Iran spurns demand for enrichment freeze

MOSCOW—IRAN SHOWED FEW SIGNS on Tuesday that it was ready to strike a deal with Russia that could allay fears it wants nuclear arms and avert possible UN sanctions.

A senior US official said Russia's role was helpful but Iran was ignoring international advice on the nuclear issue.

"We think Iran is clearly continuing to miscalculate the will of the world community," US Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs, Nicholas Burns, told reporters in Moscow.

After two days of talks in Moscow, Russian and Iranian negotiators said they planned more discussions this week on a Russian proposal to enrich uranium for Iran, seen as a way to ensure Tehran cannot divert nuclear fuel into bomb-making.

But the two sides appeared far apart, with Iran's foreign minister ruling out any return to a moratorium on uranium enrichment, which Russia has repeatedly demanded.

"We discussed a joint formula and we will continue talks," said Ali Hosseinitash, deputy secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security, who led his country's delegation in Moscow.

"Our assessment of this offer is positive," he added.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mikhail Kamynin said that Moscow's proposal had been examined in detail and that more talks were planned.

Russia later said it had called on Iran to fully cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

"From the Russian side, the necessity of Iran's full cooperation with the IAEA was underlined," the Foreign Ministry said in a short statement.

Sergei Kiriyenko, head of Russia's atomic energy agency Rosatom, is due to travel to Iran on Thursday.

Kamynin, quoted by Itar-Tass news agency, said Moscow had again stressed that Iran must restore the enrichment moratorium.

However, Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki said this was out of the question and Tehran would press ahead with its nuclear work with or without the Russian plan.

"Returning to the suspension of our nuclear activities is not on our agenda," Mottaki said in Tehran.

US officials suggest Iran is discussing the Russian plan merely to gain time, a view shared by many Russian commentators.

"Their aim is to haggle, to put off as long as possible the hour when sanctions from the international community become unavoidable," wrote the daily Izvestia.

Tehran has said it will consider a joint venture with Russia and possibly others to enrich uranium for power stations, but reserves the right to pursue enrichment at home as well. It says it wants nuclear fuel only to produce electricity, not bombs.

Iran may face action by the UN Security Council after IAEA head Mohamed ElBaradei issues a broad report on Tehran's nuclear programme to a March 6 meeting of the UN watchdog's governing board.

The report is to be circulated to members of the 35-nation board on Feb. 27 so they can digest its conclusions and forwarded to the Security Council after the meeting in Vienna.

Diplomats say they doubt the Security Council will rush into sanctions, which Russia, China and other countries oppose.

It may first pass a resolution repeating the IAEA board's demands on Iran to re-suspend all enrichment-related work and answer questions outstanding after three years of inquiries. A next step could be to expand the agency's inspection powers. *Reuters*

JAPAN'S M5 rocket is launched from the Uchinoura Space Center in Kagoshima prefecture, southwestern Japan Feb. 22. AFP

Japan launches satellite into orbit

TOKYO—JAPAN ON WEDNESDAY CONducted its third successful satellite launch in less than a month, deploying infrared cameras and a telescope to probe the origins of distant galaxies.

The Japanese space program expressed relief and hopes it was finally putting behind it a series of embarrassing setbacks including a 2003 mission that was aborted after takeoff.

"After this, I think Japan's space development program is on a stable orbit," Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency President Keiji Tachikawa said.

"I am now thinking we might have reached the (internationally competitive) level," he told a press conference.

The M5 rocket, which was delayed by one day due to heavy rainfall, was launched at 6:28 a.m. from Uchinoura Space Center in southern Japan and released the satellite 15 minutes later.

The latest satellite, a 960 kg Astro-F, is equipped with a 67-cm diameter telescope and two sets of instruments for infrared observation.

It will orbit the Earth above the twilight zone, passing over the North and South Poles and will be able to survey the entire sky in half a year.

The satellite is expected to detect more than 10 million galaxies, helping astronomers to study the life cycle of stars and investigate their origins and evolution.

Japan is seeking a slice of the lucrative commercial satellite market currently dominated by US and European operators.

Coincidentally, Europe's space program on Tuesday postponed indefinitely the launch of two satellites for technical reasons including Spain's first dedicated military satellite.

The latest Japanese satellite was nicknamed "Akari," which means light. *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Bush backs ports deal

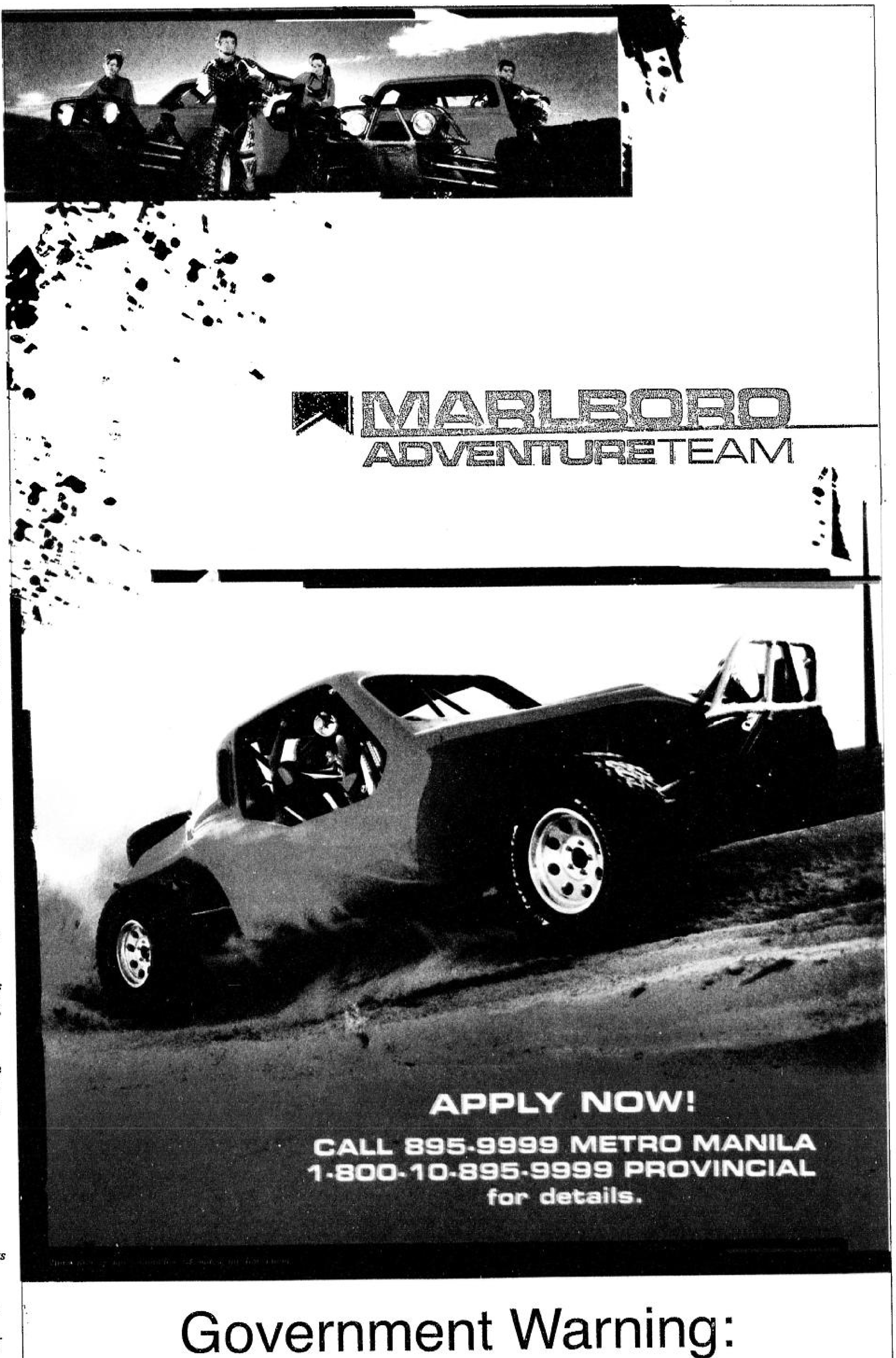
WASHINGTON—President George W. Bush vowed on Tuesday to veto any attempt to block an Arab company's takeover of management of major US seaports, defying members of Congress who insisted the deal posed security risks. "After careful review by our government, I believe the transaction ought to go forward," Bush told reporters aboard Air Force One. If Congress passed a law to stop the deal, "I'll deal with it with a veto," he said. Bush said the Dubai firm would not be in charge of security, that the deal had been thoroughly reviewed and the country would be no less safe as a result of the transaction. Dubai is a US ally, he said. Dubai Ports World is on the verge of taking over Britain's P&O, which now manages the ports. *Reuters*

3 charged in conspiracy vs US

WASHINGTON—A federal grand jury in Ohio indicted three men with plotting to kill people overseas, including US troops in Iraq, and one was charged with threatening President George W. Bush, court documents showed on Tuesday. The indictment said the three men—Mohammad Zaki Amawi, 26, Marwan Othman el-Hindi, 42, and Wassim Mazloum, 24—were part of a conspiracy that began in November 2004. "It was part of the conspiracy that one or more conspirators would recruit others to train for violent jihad against the United States and its allies in Iraq, and elsewhere, and would propose potential training sites for use in providing ongoing firearms, hand-to-hand combat, explosives and other paramilitary training to prospective recruits," the indictment said. *Reuters*

Harvard president resigns

CAMBRIDGE, Massachusetts—Lawrence H. Summers ended his tumultuous stint as Harvard University president Tuesday, announcing he would resign June 30 rather than fight with a faculty angered by his management style and comments that innate ability may explain why few women reach top science posts. "I have reluctantly concluded that the rifts between me and segments of the Arts and Sciences faculty make it infeasible for me to advance the agenda of renewal that I see as crucial to Harvard's future," Summers wrote in a letter posted on the school's website. Summers' move brings to a close the briefest tenure of any Harvard president since 1862, when Cornelius Felton died after two years in office *AP*



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Twice robbed

EDITORIAL

HAS SOME OF THE MONEY STOLEN BY FERDInand Marcos and recovered by the government been stolen again? Some senators, including Senate President Franklin Drilon, are not saying so outright yet, but they think they are on to something big and terribly rotten. So they have asked the Commission on Audit to begin examining the books of several government agencies to find out how they spent some P22 billion during the past two years. That sum constitutes the bulk of some P35 billion worth (based on the peso-dollar exchange rate in early 2004) of Marcos' deposits turned over to the government by Swiss banks.

The senators were first told by an official of the Department of Budget and Management in January this year that P13 billion was all that was left of the P35 billion. Three weeks later, Agrarian Reform Undersecretary Jeffrey Galan confirmed that his department got and spent P17.8 billion from the DBM in 2004. Drilon has pointed out that with only P13 billion left of the Marcos deposits, the DAR could only have P2 billion for this year since P11 billion (the peso equivalent of $200 million) has to be set aside for the compensation of human rights victims during martial law.

But what stirred the curiosity of some senators were the massive transfer and releases of funds shortly before the 2004 presidential elections. For example, on April 26, 2004, the Bureau of Treasury transferred P4.9 billion to the Agrarian Reform Fund (ARF). Two days later, P544 million from the ARF was released to the Department of Agriculture for its Ginintuang Masaganang Ani program, which was meant to propagate the use of hybrid rice and provide fertilizers to cooperating farmers. Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr., chair of the Senate committee on Food and Agriculture has pointed out, however, that not a single farmers' organization has confirmed that it had received any fertilizer from the program. This program is separate from the P728-million fertilizer fund whose disbursement was marred by gross overpricing and other abuses.

Earlier in March 2004, the National Irrigation Administration got P541.74 million and the Department of Public Works and Highways got P900 million, both from the ARF. Although the DAR had prepared a list of irrigation and farm-to-market roads that would benefit agrarian reform beneficiaries, the list was allegedly revised to accommodate the requests of certain politicians.

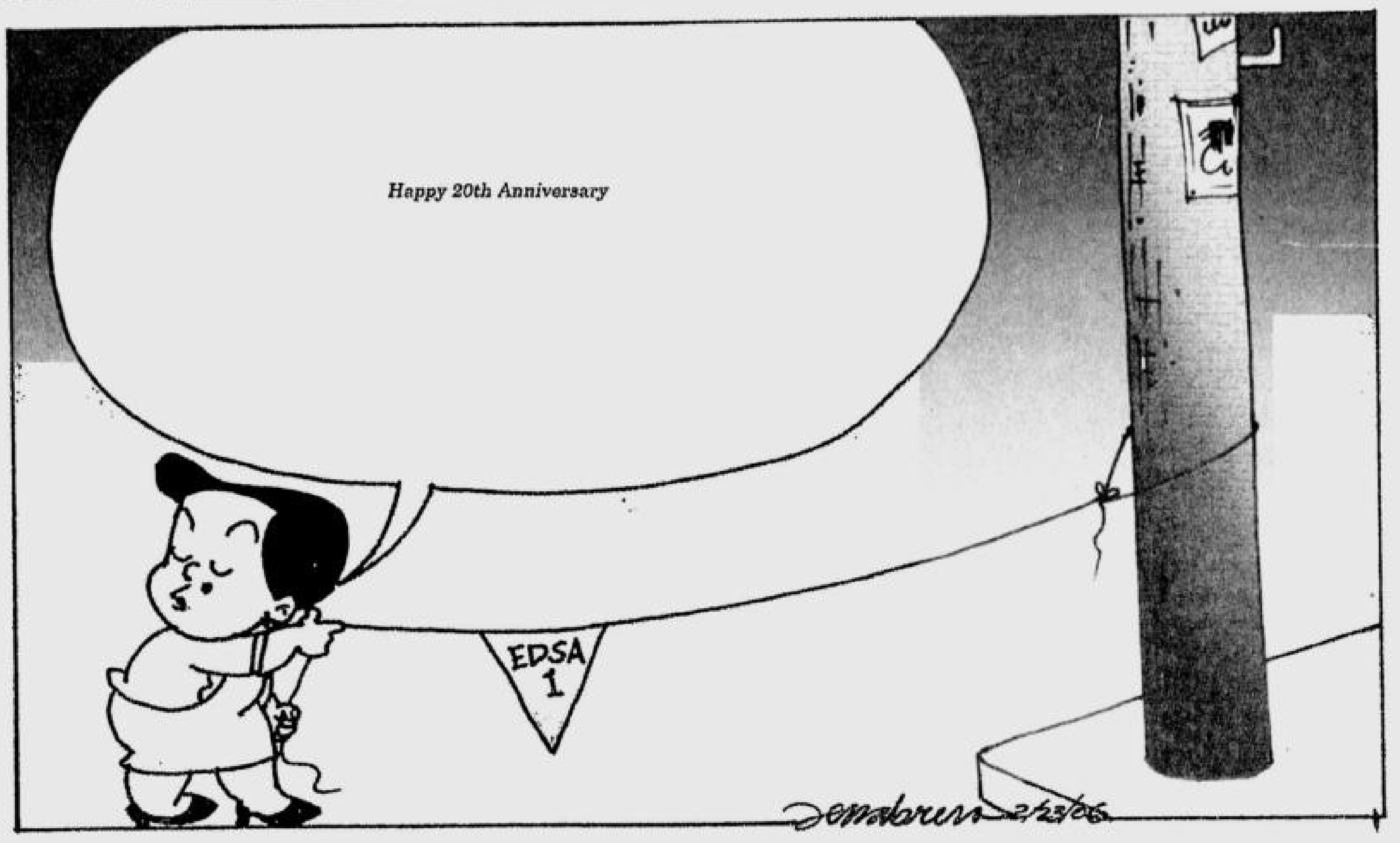
Aside from these anomalies unearthed by the Senate, Drilon has pointed out other directions that the special COA audit should take. First, was the use of the funds for the purchase of fertilizers and the construction of roads authorized by a resolution of the Presidential Agrarian Reform Council as mandated by law? DAR officials could not produce the resolution during the Senate hearing earlier this month.

Second, did the DAR apportion the money in accordance with the provision of law that says 70 percent of Marcos' ill-gotten wealth that is recovered must be used for land redistribution and 30 for support services?

Third, did the projects funded by the Marcos Swiss deposits benefit agrarian reform beneficiaries? Drilon said only 20 percent of the farmers who got hybrid rice seeds under the P544-million GMA program were qualified to receive such support.

Fourth, where did the bulk of the money go? Aside from the controversial fund releases before the elections amounting to nearly P2 billion, P20 billion of the Swiss deposits is gone. Can the DAR account for that huge amount?

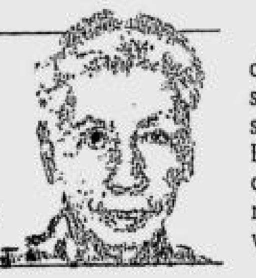
If the senators' instincts are right, they could be on the trail of the biggest scam yet. But they need the COA's help to sniff out where the stink of corruption is coming from. In the P728-million fertilizer scam, the COA proved itself equal to the task by declaring that the products were overpriced by as much as 12 times their actual cost. It can do no less in this new case.



Murder? Wink. Wink.

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado



IT'S BEEN OVER A YEAR NOW SINCE CEBU City Mayor Tomas Osmeña launched what was dubbed as "murder with a wink" policy. So, what has His Honor to show for bonneted killers who salvage with impunity, in a city he's primping up for the Asean Summit?

Some 117 unsolved rubouts later, Cebu has been tagged "Murder Capital." The hand-wringing intensified after an Asian Institute of Management survey of 65 urban centers shut Cebu out of the top 20 most viable business cities.

Yet, that unwelcome label is anchored on hard data. Davao's *esquadrones de la muerte* took seven years before their body count topped 153, Coalition Against Summary Executions statistics show. It was 107 last year.

"Cebu is fast catching up," Redemptorist Fr. A. Picardal told a conference on summary executions.

The virus infects Digos, Tangub, General Santos, now Cebu and even Luzon.

"I'm not proud of that record," Osmeña said. "But I am not exactly sad criminals were killed .... It's a question of dosage." Wink. Wink.

Has human life been stripped to calibrated doses? Who decides whose blood is to be a "dosage"? And who says stop? Or more?

Many are fed up with unsolved crime, inept police, bribable fiscals and snail-paced courts. Thus, Osmeña announced, in December 2004, he'd field a heavily armed "Hunter's Team" to go after criminals. Good governance sprouts from the barrel of a gun.

For any cop who'd "permanently disable" a criminal, Osmeña promised a bounty of P20,000. If a cop on leave bags a robber, he'll get P10,000.

The taking of life, by an abortionist or vigilante, is evil, Cardinal Ricardo Vidal snapped. The judicial system is violated when prosecutor, judge and executioner are rolled up into a mayor's say-so, the Integrated Bar protested. "*Utos ni* mayor" dislodges the Constitution with its guarantees of life and due process.

"We'll go to the law's limit and whack them," Osmeña retorted. "But we will respect human rights." Wink. Wink.

Osmeña prides himself as an honorable man. At P20,000 per head, the "pacified" bunch of 117 vigilante victims means the mayor, in honoring his word, had paid P2.34 million to date.

It's taboo to use public funds for crime payrolls. Philanthropy, however, is not one of the mayor's virtues. So, who provided the shekels? Friends? If businessmen, did they claim these as "deductions"? On BIR Form 1701Q? Or on corporate tax returns?

Is there a list of who received the blood money? Is pulling the trigger while masked on a motorcycle a tax-exempt "industry"? Or are vigilantes subject, like the rest of us mortals, to the EVAT and other levies? Wink. Wink.

But those who wink at crime partake of crime itself. That's the law. Blood on the gunpowder-stained hands of vigilantes smears blood on the manicured hands of those who sponsor, cheer or assent, by silence, the rubouts.

"There's the smell of blood still," wails Lady Macbeth after murdering the king. "All the perfumes in Arabia will not clean this little hand."

Like mayors, criminals have a right to life, liberty, security of person and due process. That's what the Constitution says. So does the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Those who trifle with life promote a culture of death, the late Pope John Paul II stressed in his encyclical "Evangelium Vitae." "Judgment will be severe" by the God of history.

But murder with a wink deters crime. "I'm more interested in protecting citizens," says Osmeña. He would not investigate if cops bent rules of engagement.

This clones Mao Zedong's rule: "Kill the chicken to scare the monkeys." Jose Maria Sison invoked the same policy to justify the assassination of communist leaders, like Romulo Kintanar, who had quit the movement. That'd dampen further defections from a splintered rebellion. "Stop playing God," cried Kintanar's widow.

Drug lords aren't scared. Corrupt officials carry on. Gambling flourishes. No big fish has been landed. Crime rates haven't slumped.

The vigilante victims were petty criminals. Others did time in jail. Some had started rebuilding their lives in honest businesses. Most were unarmed when their lives were snuffed out. A wink denied them a second chance at life.

"The common characteristic is their names appeared in lists compiled by the police, often from material provided by barangay intelligence networks," notes Father Picardal.

Police credibility in Cebu has taken a beating. "The police launch pro forma probes," Cebu Daily News noted. "These will fizzle out, sooner rather than later. And they know you know." Wink. Wink.

A police force that cannot solve even one of 117 murders is totally inept—and should be fired. Or it's neck deep in the mess—and should be cashiered.

Salvaging is "a cheap price to pay for peace and order," Davao businessmen told Reuters. But those who bankroll vigilantes know a wrong wink could find gunmen at their once-secure doors. Not even mayors can guarantee control of *esquadrones de la muerte*. And "every unpunished murder takes away something from the security of every man's life," Daniel Webster once said.

If it is somebody else's life that is bartered, there's little outcry. Not a single member of the city council, for example, has denounced the killings. Few NGOs have spoken up. "On the day you remain silent on things that matter, you begin to die," Martin Luther King once said.

* * *

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Where's the 'people' in 'People Power'?

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

BISHOP SOCRATES VILLEGAS, JAIME CARDInal Sin's protégé, had a very vivid description of the Arroyo government in view of its reluctance to celebrate the 20th anniversary of Edsa I with any fervor. Vivid and accurate. The low-key celebrations, he said, typified the behavior of "pimps and rapists" who fled their victims after getting what they wanted. The reason the Arroyo government does not want the event recalled with passion was that it has "abused and plundered" the Edsa legacy. "I protest the way government remembers its roots. I pity People Power."

Villegas has got a very good point. Though I wonder why he didn't rise to fulminate about exactly the same thing in 2004 when Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo stole the vote. As far as raping the nation goes, I cannot imagine a more vicious case of it. Stealing the vote is not just raping the nation, it is raping—and—murdering the nation, done with complete callousness and scorn for the victim. Indeed, as pimping goes, the Church too was spotted at the scene of the crime in May 2004, inviting the rapist to feel free to assault Inang Bayan.

But Villegas has every reason to fume. Indeed, if what I hear is true, the people currently planning the official Edsa celebrations want to cut out Cory from the scene altogether, or give her a minor role in it. What can I say? They've pretty much stolen everything, why not Edsa, too?

But while on the subject of stealing Edsa, I don't know that it's just the Arroyo government that's guilty of theft in that respect. The interpretation of events is a curious thing. It is not just a way of looking at what has happened, it is a way of laying a claim or proprietary right to what has happened. The importance of historians like the late Renato Constantino, reinterpreting Philippine history from a Filipino point of view rather than from a Spanish or American one, from the point of view of the colonized rather than the colonizer's, is not just another way of presenting the nation's past, it is a way of reclaiming or seizing back that past. Interpreting what happened is not just an opportunity for self-aggrandizement, it is a means for self-entitlement.

That's true of Edsa as well. What is the official version or interpretation of the Edsa story? Well, it is not unlike the Pasyon story. It takes off from the murder of Ninoy Aquino in 1983, a murder which awoke the country from slumber. The blood that was spilled on the tarmac became as rain on soil, whence sprouted a bitter harvest for the regime. It fueled massive rallies led by Ninoy's widow, who became the local Joan of Arc. Cory was later cheated of the presidency in rigged elections, a thing that so angered the populace they went out to protect the military officers that had mutinied against Marcos a month later. The result was Edsa, the salvation of the country from a tyrant.

None of that is entirely false, but none of that is entirely true either. This version of Edsa, which regards everything that happened after Aug. 21, 1983 as history and everything before that as prehistory, quite simply overlooks the most important actor in the Edsa story, or relegates it to a minor role. That is the people. That is why it is called People Power: It is the handiwork of the people.

Over the last couple of weeks, I've read accounts of the exploits of people who were at Edsa. I have not read similar accounts of the struggle against Marcos throughout the course of martial law, which was waged by the people themselves. It's not true the people were awoken from their slumber after August 1983 simply because they weren't exactly sleeping before that. They were fighting Marcos in the hills, in the fields, in the factories, in the streets, in their homes. Many of them died, or got wounded or maimed doing so, their blood keeping the flame of protest alive, ready to burst into a raging fire at the right moment. What happened before Aug. 21, 1983 was not prehistory, the technical preparations for the drama about to unfold on the stage; it was history, an integral part of the story that unfolds on the stage. Without it, the story would be unintelligible. Without it, the story would not unfold.

Without the blood of the martyrs that came before, Ninoy would never have become the martyr he did. His murder might have shocked the nation, but it would not have galvanized it into the explosion that later became Edsa. Without the struggle that came before, there would not have been the ferocious protest rallies that came after. Indeed, without the raging insurgency in the countryside—which convinced the Americans Marcos could never be part of the solution as he was in fact the best recruiter for the NPA—Paul Laxalt might never have been persuaded to tell Marcos to "cut, and cut clean" when a handful of mutineers holed up at Camp Aguinaldo and Fabian Ver was very literally asking Marcos to rain death on them.

The official version of People Power is faint praise for—or a left-handed compliment to—the people. While presumably lauding them and their power, it reduces them to background material, to a crowd to be summoned by heroic individuals during crunch time, indeed to a herd to be led this way and that by saviors, real or imagined, instead of making them out to be the real authors of their salvation. Edsa did not begin with the death Ninoy Aquino, it began long before, when the first activist died in defiance of dictatorship. It began when the first city dweller wrote graffiti on the wall and launched a thousand jokes to protest the dictatorship. It began when the first tenant, worker, student, ordinary citizen took arms to defend himself from the dictatorship.

By all means, let's talk about People Power today. But let's remember too—the people.

Uniting in the face of disasters

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE FOUR-DAY CELEBRATION OF EDSA WAS off to an early start yesterday at the Libingan ng Mga Bayani in Fort Bonifacio, where President Macapagal-Arroyo laid a wreath on the tomb of the Unknown Soldier. In the presence of the diplomatic corps, Armed Forces personnel and government officials, the President read one of the most quoted biblical passages from Ecclesiastes: "There is a season for everything, a time for every occupation under heaven: A time for giving birth, a time for dying; a time for planting, a time for uprooting what has been planted. A time for killing, a time for healing; a time for knocking down, a time for building. A time for tears, a time for laughter; a time for mourning, a time for dancing ...." and so on.

Yesterday's ceremony was heavy with the scent of the tragedy in St. Bernard, Southern Leyte. Thus, it was natural for the President to stress that underlying all those beautifully balanced phrases of the Ecclesiastes was one recurring theme: "A time to serve." And so she pledged anew to devote her administration to service.

After the wreath-laying, GMA, true to her vow, was off to Southern Leyte to visit the disaster area and check on the rescue and relief operations there. She then proceeded to Cebu for a conference with NGOs and local government officials.

* * *

About the same time, for over two hours, huddled inside a room in the Peninsula Hotel in Makati were opposition leaders led by former President Corazon Aquino. With them were the "Hyatt 10" former Cabinet officials and the Makati Business Club faction of Bill Luz and Ricardo Romulo. There were speculations that this group of malcontents was plotting various protest actions for the next three days.

Many people, however, would see the action of this group as an indication of its members' callousness to the human suffering in St. Bernard. While foreigners from various corners of the earth, e.g., the United States, Taiwan, Malaysia and Japan, were working feverishly in Leyte, trying to find survivors in the buried school building, the malcontents were plotting to bring down this government. There's even a rumor that some senators would publicly withdraw support from GMA. But as the Ecclesiastes puts it, "There is a season for everything, a time for every occupation under heaven." These weeks of tremendous suffering and sorrow for our countrymen are a time for helping with whatever we can muster. But sadly, all that the opposition seems to think of is how to bring down GMA, when the nation should be uniting in the wake of recent disasters.

* * *

The two opposing sides arguing the legality of EO 464—the senators led by Sen. Joker Arroyo on the one hand, and Solicitor General Alfredo Benipayo, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez and Presidential Legal Adviser Eduardo Nachura, on the other—certainly earned their keep last Monday. The two groups argued both sides of the EO in the presence of the Supreme Court justices for nearly 11 hours, starting at 1 p.m. and ending just before midnight. There are a number of lawyers among the senators, but they had to pick one who wasn't even an original signatory to the opposing petition, perhaps in recognition of Joker's role as the "Lion of the Impeachment" of Joseph Estrada in December 2000 and January 2001. During Tuesday's marathon session, the protagonists didn't get to grab a bite. It was also interesting that Arroyo and Gonzalez, who were close buddies against Marcos during the martial law regime, were rebutting each other in the court.

Judging from their arguments, I tend to agree with Sen. Miriam Santiago's guess that the Court would not strike down EO 464 as unconstitutional but seek to regulate its use by setting parameters.

* * *

One small detail in the coverage of that hearing elicited a laugh from me. That was when Joker Arroyo told the justices that EO 464 would "emasculate our legislative power" and make the President "almost a dictator." Judging from records, however, the Senate's legislative power seems to have been emasculated long before EO 464 was promulgated. Last year, for instance, the Senate was able to pass only four bills. Divide the huge bill for its upkeep of P1.8 billion by this number, and the cost of each bill comes up to about P400 million each!

* * *

The Senate's "emasculation" was stressed in a letter from Agusan Rep. Leovigildo Banaag, chair of the House committee on natural resources, who reacted to an item here about how the "Billion Trees Act," authored principally by Speaker Jose de Venecia and passed by the House on third reading last April 2005, had slumbered in the Senate even during the 12th Congress. Banaag opined that perhaps if that bill had been passed by the Senate, the denudation of our forests would have been addressed more decisively. Banaag also related that last Feb. 6, during the joint session of Congress to hear the address of Indian President Kamal, he conferred with his Senate counterpart, Pia Cayetano, on the need for the Senate to act on a total of 24 bills on environment and natural resources. These were all passed by the House but are languishing in the Senate. Aside from the Billion Trees Act, noted Banaag, among those 24 bills is a local bill declaring a total log ban in Southern Leyte, where St. Bernard is located.

The Billion Trees Act could be the answer to the massive denudation of our forests and mountains and it could as well as jumpstart the rural economy by providing millions of jobs. Incidentally, during the Cory administration, a massive reforestation program was started, but it was no secret that a lot of the funds went to line the pockets of high-ranking functionaries. Thus, the need for a new law on reforestation a decade and a half later, which, however, has slept in the Senate for many years already.

Howard Dee, man for peace

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

"TODAY THE FLAMES OF EDSA ARE FLICKERING, peaceful reform is dying on the vine and our democracy is threatened again."

Thus spoke a humble and spiritual man of action whose quest for peace and progress for the poor has been unceasing.

Howard Q. Dee, peacemaker, social development worker, friend of the poor and indigenous communities, former ambassador to the Vatican and businessman, was honored last Monday in simple rites as the sole recipient of the 2006 Aurora Aragon Quezon Peace Award.

Persons from both sides of the political, ideological and social divides came to fete this simple man whose name has become synonymous with peace and development especially in strife-torn and poverty-stricken communities in the country.

"My heart is filled with gratitude yet I feel no sense of triumph," Dee told the small crowd. "I feel no pride of achievement in the face of so much injustice and widespread poverty that condemns so many of our people to a life of subhuman existence."

But just as quickly, Dee lifted spirits by quoting a French philosopher: "The important thing is not to be a success. The important thing is to be in history, bearing witness. This is not the time to lose heart. Rather, it is in the darkness that our lamps should be lit and our hearts set ablaze."

Bearing witness has in fact been a way of life for the 75-year-old Dee, be it in the realm of his Christian faith or for his country, family and a myriad of concerns. He talks softly but walks briskly toward a goal, especially if it involves those who suffer in the margins of society. And just as zealously, he has worked hard to address, in ways he knows how, the roots and causes of poverty and "unpeace."

Dee was born in Tondo in 1930. He attended San Beda College and the University of the East where he finished management accounting. He later took graduate studies in economics and public finance. Dee is married to Betty Marie Dee with whom he has four children and a caboodle of grandchildren.

Drawing inspiration from the Italian saint Francis of Assisi who embraced poverty and simplicity, Dee founded the Assisi Development Foundation in 1975, as his way of responding to the crying need of many. Social development, he believes, is a channel through which the poor can be empowered and raised from penury.

Dee has been active in development groups, such as Tabang Mindanao, Pagtabangan Basulta (Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi) and the Philippine Business for Social Progress, as well as in church-related ones, like Bahay Maria and the Family Rosary Crusade. In 2004, he helped establish ASA Philippines, in partnership with the Benigno S. Aquino Foundation, to provide micro-finance services for the poor. He was the driving force behind last year's launching of the Hapag-asa Feeding Program of Pondo ng Pinoy in the archdiocese of Manila.

Dee even found time to be in government service. He served for 16 years under four presidents. He was ambassador to the Vatican and Malta from 1986 to 1990, then became lead convenor of the 1990 National Peace Commission. He was chair of the Panel for Peace talks between the government and the insurgent communists from 1993 to 1996. In 2002, he became Presidential Adviser on Indigenous Peoples' Affairs.

Dee also found time to write books—"God's Greatest Gift," "Mankind's Final Destiny," and "Living the Beatitudes with St. Joseph"—all about living the Christian faith.

Having been involved in projects in Muslim Mindanao, Dee has developed a deep understanding of the Muslim-Christian conflict and continues to work in bridging the divide.

At the awarding rites, individuals who knew Dee up-close gave their testimonials. INQUIRER president Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez called Dee "a living saint ... a gifted person ... not afraid of problems ... not afraid to dream" and always seeking opportunities to do more. Undersecretary Rene V. Sarmiento of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) described him as "a man fully alive for peace and for God."

Commissioner Reuben Dasay A. Lingating of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples-North and Western Mindanao lauded Dee, specially citing his efforts to seek freedom for members of indigenous groups who were in jail because of cultural misunderstanding and lack of representation in the mainstream judicial system.

Bishop Antonio Ledesma of Ipil called Dee "a man for Mindanao," while Archbishop Oscar Quevedo of Cotabato called him "an authentic peacemaker." Former Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Teresita Q. Deles, described Dee as "among the most transparent beings I have ever met."

Added Deles: "I guess it comes from the clarity of knowing where to stand in the many shades of gray between black and white. And we know it comes from living a truly spiritual life from day to day, where the light and wisdom of our Lord shines through." Dee, she said, is " a moral compass and often the lone voice in the wilderness that clears the noise within and paves the way to truth, reason and compassion."

After all the accolades, Dee could only say, "What can I say? I am ready to die." Turning serious, Dee paid tribute to his "four mentors:

"Cardinal Jaime Sin in the joy of our faith; Fr. Francisco Araneta, S.J. in the cause of social justice and human development; Presidential Peace Adviser Haydee Yorac in the nobility of public service; and Justice Cecilia Muñoz-Palma in the ways of peace and nationhood." Dee called them "giants in our history."

Stressed Dee: "I have achieved nothing but by God's grace. Serving was a privilege, service is its own reward."

In this age of instant stars and dazzling upstarts, Dee quietly stands out as a man apart, a man for others, a flame braving the tempest.

* * *

Send feedback to cerespd@info.com.ph

A complete revolution

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

OUT OF AN ACCIDENT, WE HAVE PERPETUALLY tried to find a larger purpose. A bungled coup led to an unplanned mass action; the mass action led to a confrontation between a dictator and his minions, and the rest of the country. The dictator ended up in Hawaii. That was 20 years ago, this week.

Twenty years is not only a generation, it is an epoch, an era, in the life of nations. A generation marks the transformation of the vigorous to the timid and old; and the rise of the young, unaware and unconcerned. In the same way the generation that lived through the Philippine Revolution and Philippine-American War feared that younger Filipinos were unprepared either for the serious challenges of independence, or the grim realities of a world war. In the same way the generation that earned its spurs during World War II viewed young radicals with incomprehension and outright suspicion, two decades later. In the same way those who lived through the 1960s and early 1970s took a dim view of the public passions expressed in the protest marches after 1983, and of the culminating event that was the Edsa Revolution. And in the same way those at Edsa I developed a dim view of the young at Edsa II, who saw the latter as a chance to live up to the legacy of the first Edsa; but whom their elders judged as incapable of comprehending what it took to achieve the original People Power.

Twenty years later, the time has come for Edsa I to be buried: the main protagonists themselves are leaving the scene; many of those who were there have left for other climes and countries.

But as in the days of the kings of old, the call should be, "Edsa is dead! Long live Edsa!"

One era has come to a close; and the choice is between burying it (beyond the recovery of memory and ideals) and giving it a rebirth, like a phoenix rising from the ashes.

From the searing flames that have consumed our national self-confidence and pride over the past 20 years, what must we dispense with as merely bitter ashes, and what should we retain as valuable, indispensable, hard and brilliant truths, like diamonds created under tremendous pressure?

I believe that Edsa I was, in fact, a revolution from within—the kind of self-liberation that some piously insist still has to take place—a revolution against isolation, against the feeling of being alone when holding on to one's sense of decency, patriotism and idealism.

Dictators, whether elected or self-proclaimed, anchor their authority on force, which they use to scatter any opposition to them, and to keep the individual just that—alone, atomized, incapable of belonging to a larger (and, therefore, to the dictators, dangerously independent-minded) whole. Ferdinand Marcos thrived on divisions—turning his World War II generation against its own children, the middle-class and the poor against the very wealthy, and the very wealthy against the poor—selectively applying force to ensure that any person or group capable of bridging the divides he cultivated would be struck down.

Slowly, Filipinos learned to rise from their isolation, starting with their conquering their fears; then nurturing this achievement by developing their capacity to empathize with those already persecuted and shunned; and then realizing that everyone was actually in that situation.

The furtive glances and fearful looks gave way to an exhilarating desire to make noise and be heard. When Ninoy Aquino was killed, it was felt—and expressed—like a kind of electricity, crackling and sparking from one heart and mind to the next, as individuals resolved to be brave by showing empathy. I have said time and again: bravery was a decision made on their own by the millions who condoled with Ninoy's family. Bravery became a habit when the millions realized they were millions of Filipinos of a like mind.

So thoroughly successful was that revolution that those who accomplished it are hard put, today, to even recall the fear they once felt, much less to communicate to those who never felt it what it was like. A person long used to crouching finds it illogical and strange to recall a life spent in submission, once he gets used to standing tall.

There is, of course, an inescapable self-satisfaction that comes from having had to live in submission, yet surviving and living long enough to reduce the humiliation to a mere memory. With that self-satisfaction comes a kind of arrogance—look at the young, they never had to bow and scrape, see how freely and irresponsibly they take what we had to reclaim, even earn!—and seductive complacency anchored on the thought that having gone through such historic times, one has paid his or her dues to both history and oneself.

It is like those scenes in the movies where the prisoners discover the most touching truths about their shared humanity while they are in chains, only to quickly run away from each other the moment they are free. The rush of liberation is accompanied by a sudden return to the isolation of self-interest. We are free! Now it is every man for himself. And the prison guards, seeing this, confidently say: "See, they always were beasts, always eager to be slaves."

The writer Charlson Ong, in an essay he penned some years back, wondered if Edsa hadn't proven to be a lie, in the same manner that Marcos' New Society was a lie. And yet he dared conclude: "But if Edsa does turn out to be a lie, then it is but the same lie lovers succumb to again and again. If it be fantasy, then it was at least our fantasy. To paraphrase some lines from Kahlil Gibran poetizing about pleasure: Edsa is a freedom song, but it is not freedom, it is the blossoming of our desires but not their fruits."

Gambling with life

YOUNG BLOOD

Maria Leni D. Oro

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

IT WAS A GLOOMY SATURDAY AND I WAS HOPING I would not be asked to help with the chores around the house. The last thing I wanted was to receive a text message that would worsen my already sullen mood.

But there it was, a message forwarded by a close friend asking for prayers for those who had been killed in a stampede at the Ultra as they waited in line for an anniversary treat of a popular noontime show. It took minutes for the message to sink into my cluttered brain. I'm not usually like that, but the message left me in shock for some time and all I could do was stare at my cell phone and read the message over and over again.

Later, I erased the text. I couldn't believe people could be so desperate as to risk their lives in the hope of winning a million even if there was a remote probability of hitting the jackpot. I couldn't believe people could be fooled into believing that by joining a show, they would be freed from the claws of poverty and live comfortable lives.

My parents have always taught me the value of hard work. We live in Sto. Niño, a remote town in North Cotabao where farming is the people's main source of income. My father has to wake up as early as three o'clock in the morning to go to the field where for most of the day he works under the heat of the sun. He takes a break only to eat lunch, and then he resumes plowing the field until sunset. At the end of the day, he comes home with his clothes dirty as rags and his face red and swollen by the heat of the sun. He always complains of body aches that seem to torture him deep into the night. And we would apply liniments and massage his tired muscles to ease his pain.

My mother is a teacher. She is assigned to a school some 30 kilometers from where we live. She wakes up at the same time as my father, prepares breakfast, calls out to us to get out of bed and begins to deliver her daily sermon. More often than not, she arrives in school late. And she comes home late in the evening, bringing nothing but a tired face and a body that is close to collapse.

I pity my parents, and it pains me to realize that I cannot extend any help to them. I hate the fact that they have to abuse their bodies so that they can earn the little that they get from their jobs. We are drowning in debt so that whatever they earn has already been spent long before they get their hands on the money. We can't even afford to eat in the fast-food outlets we have heard so much about and we can't go to town to watch movies. It has been years since we last entered a shopping mall or a movie house as one family. I cannot even remember the last time anyone in our family celebrated a birthday. But as of now, all I can do is wish that we will survive our pathetic situation and someday live in comfort.

I am in college now and I have left our home to pursue my education in the city. I don't have to massage my father when he comes home or hear my mother's daily sermon. But I know how hard they push themselves so that our family can eat and I can study in the university.

I cannot blame those people who think a good life is a matter of luck. I don't want to blame them if they continue to believe that fate dictates what kind of life you live, and that there's little you can do to change it unless you stumble upon a pot of gold.

When the time comes for me to start a family of my own, I want to make sure that I am well prepared to do so. I will make sure that my partner and I have jobs and that we have our own house. I want to be sure our children's future will be bright. I will spend money wisely so I wouldn't have to beg in order for all of us to live. I will make sure that I can send my children to good schools so that they will acquire the skills needed in an increasingly competitive world. I will see to it that I save enough so that I can retire in comfort.

The dreams that were crushed at Ultra are the same hopes that are being crushed by the dire situation of our economy. The tragedy shows how much poverty has spread all over our land. If the government had been more successful in bringing prosperity to our country, people wouldn't cling to the hope of bringing home from a noontime show a million pesos, or a house and lot or even just a tricycle.

I wish people would come to their senses and realize that a television show is not a ticket out of poverty. A show might help the lucky ones, but people shouldn't look up to it as the only answer to their financial needs. Money that is not a product of one's sweat and perspiration is easily spent, but money earned through hard work is valued much more.

I know that I am greatly blessed that I don't have to rely on luck to secure my future. But I have to make good in my studies so that success won't elude me for long. Each one of us hopes for the best life, but unless we work hard to get what we want we are not going to hit the jackpot.

Maria Leni D. Oro, 18, is a Chemical Engineering sophomore at Notre Dame of Marbel University in Koronadal City.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@ uirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

THEY SAID

Fertile trail

"Considering the gravity of this mind-boggling corruption scheme and the reckless paper trail it left behind for everyone to see, I think it is now incumbent upon the Office of the Ombudsman to take over this case."

—Senate President Franklin Drilon on the P728-million fertilizer fund scam

Barren truth

"Now I realize why you could not tell the whole truth, partly because of the far-reaching implications of the sad truth, as confirmed by the admission of Budget Secretary Romulo Neri."

—Former Sen. Jovito Salonga, in his letter to the President, expressing dismay over the government's admission that only P8 billion is left of the P35-billion recovered Marcos wealth and that the biggest disbursements were made right before and immediately after the 2004 elections

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PET review proves cheating

THIS REFERS TO THE COLUMN of Belinda Olivares-Cunanan, titled "Shouldn't PET revision be the 'closure'?" (PDI, 2/16/06)

Cunanan cited the claim of Romulo Macalintal, counsel for Noli de Castro in the vice presidential electoral protest case, that "the PET [Presidential Electoral Tribunal] has so far found no significant anomaly in the ballots cast for the two top officials," referring to President Macapagal-Arroyo and De Castro.

On the contrary, in the retabulation of election returns before the PET, which has just started, my lawyers and representatives have found solid and multiple evidence of widespread electoral fraud involving the election returns from Cebu, Lanao del Sur and other provinces.

The fraud became evident when the ballot boxes from Cebu and other provinces, which were retrieved from the House of Representatives, were found to contain fake and falsified election returns apparently substituted for the genuine ones while in the custody of Congress. Many other election returns covered by my electoral protest are missing.

The PET has taken cognizance of this by requiring House officials in charge of the custody of the election returns to explain why many of the returns from protested precincts were missing from the ballot boxes retrieved from them, and to produce those documents for examination.

My lawyers have also formally filed a motion with the PET to allow them to compare the certified copies of election returns kept by the Commission on Elections and the National Movement for Free Elections to prove the spuriousness of the election returns retrieved from Congress. My lawyers believe that the genuine election returns were substituted with fake ones to cover up the massive electoral fraud in the 2004 polls.

The retabulation of the election returns from the contested precincts in various parts of the country, particularly Cebu, will definitely prove there was widespread cheating and fraud in the last elections, thus altering the genuine results of the vice presidential elections.

I am disappointed that Cunanan, a veteran journalist whom I admire, should ignore a fundamental rule of journalism—that both sides of a controversy should be quoted or cited to ensure fairness in reportage and commentary. I declare that the truth of the results of the last presidential and vice presidential elections has been suppressed and twisted, and that the truth has come out through my protest.

I appeal to media and the public not to be misled but to go by the hard evidence of this case which is of paramount interest to our people. I am convinced that, in the end, I will be vindicated and that truth will triumph.

—LOREN LEGARDA,
former senator,
vice presidential candidate,
Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang
Pilipino, 2004 elections

Sunshine articles; sunflower snacks made in RP?

I READ FRANK CIMATU'S ARTICLE, "Garbage makes sunflowers glow" in the INQUIRER's Feb. 10 issue and I would like to commend and thank him for highlighting another success story in the countryside.

May I request Cimatu to inform the Vigan City sunflower growers (if he has their contact numbers/e-mail address) that there's a snack product made (in Malaysia) of sunflower seeds. It is very delicious! Perhaps, they can find a way to replicate this product or even improve on it. They can probably ask someone traveling to Malaysia to bring some samples. I'll also try to see if I can ask my Malaysian colleagues to send me a pack (if anyone of them is visiting Manila soon).

I look forward to reading more articles of the kind Cimatu wrote. Many thanks to the INQUIRER, too!

—MARY ANNE VELAS,
CH2M Hill Philippines Inc.,
41/F Discovery Center,
25 ADB Avenue,
Ortigas Center, Pasig City

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Wrong values in TV shows

WRONG VALUES WERE SHOWCASED BY "Wowowee." Its organizers used the poor in order to gain.

They promoted gambling. They enticed people with instant wealth, giving them the notion that "Wowowee" could be the answer to their poverty.

Boycott this program and other similar shows. Let us teach Filipinos to work hard and become self-reliant.

—KRISTJOHN RUSTIA,
kristjohn_rustia@yahoo.com

IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate @inquirer.com.ph

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Legislate national policy on AIDS

WHILE IT IS GOOD TO KNOW that the Catholic Church and the government have expressed concern over the alarming rise of HIV/AIDS cases in the country and have pledged to launch a preventive campaign, efforts by other sectors to address the HIV/AIDS problem through the promotion of artificial family planning methods, specifically the use of condoms, should not be derailed.

Fr. Robert Vitillo, Caritas International's special advisor on HIV/AIDS, said the Church will maintain its traditional teaching on sexual abstinence outside of marriage and fidelity to one partner, choosing to take "the long route of educating the public" as its strategy. Although he gave assurance that such should not prevent the government from coming up with other measures to address the spread of the disease, the use of condom as a major strategy for reducing HIV infection remains a controversial issue vehemently opposed by some sectors.

Recent reports have put the number of HIV/AIDS cases at 11,200 last year from only 6,000 in 2002. According to the Department of Health, this sharp increase has largely been attributed to mobile clients of sex workers.

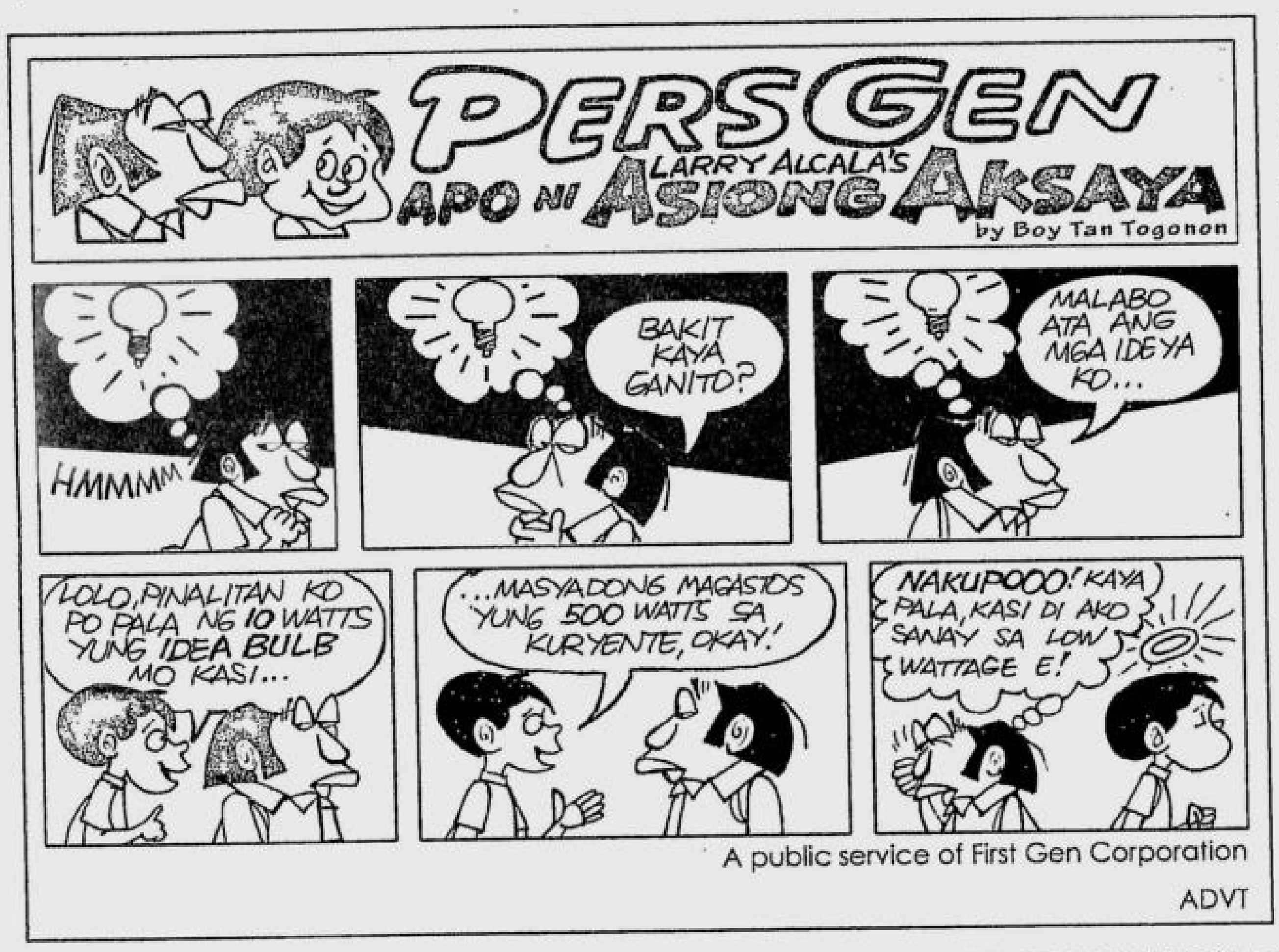
For his part, Health Secretary Francisco Duque III has warned of an "epidemic explosion" in just a few years or decades. The same warning was issued by his predecessor, Manuel Dayrit, during his time.

We cannot say, though, that we do not have concrete policies to decisively address the problem. The Philippine AIDS Prevention and Control Act of 1998 institutes a nationwide HIV/AIDS information and education program, monitoring systems, and a multisectoral National AIDS Council to oversee an integrated and comprehensive approach to HIV/AIDS prevention and control. However, the government's pandering to religious objections to condom use has perilously prevented it from fully implementing the policy. This is a classic example of a national policy already in place but lacking in implementation.

But more than the implementation of policies specific to the HIV/AIDS problem is the equally important need to legislate a national policy on reproductive health, providing both men and women equal access to prevention and care services, and the children orphaned by the disease the needed support.

The HIV/AIDS problem is a gargantuan catastrophe waiting to happen. And it is bound to happen unless we do something realistic about it.

—RAMON SAN PASCUAL,
executive director,
Philippine Legislators'
Committee on
Population and Development
Foundation Inc. (PLCPD),
Rm. 611 Northwing Bldg.,
House of Representatives,
Batasan Complex, Quezon City


PERSGEN
LARRY ALCALA'S
APO NI ASIONG AKSAYA
by Boy Tan Togonon
HMMMM
BAKIT KAYA GANITO?
MALABO ATA ANG MGA IDEYA KO...
LOLO, PINALITAN KO PO PALA NG 10 WATTS YUNG IDEA BULB MO KASI...
...MASYADONG MAGASTOS YUNG 500 WATTS SA KURYENTE, OKAY!
NAKUPOOO! KAYA PALA, KASI DI AKO SANAY SA LOW WATTAGE E!

A public service of First Gen Corporation
ADVT

Disincentive to prospective investors

IT ALARMS US TO HEAR SO-CALLED INVESTMENT consultants badgering the government to stampede into a fire sale of the generation assets of the National Power Corp. The badgering diverts public attention from what ails the power industry.

The government's failure to open up Meralco's stranglehold on the electricity market—70 percent of Luzon, 60 percent nationwide—is the disincentive to prospective buyers of Napocor power plants. Where will the more efficient producers sell their power in a market where the monopoly distributor (Meralco) is willing to pay a higher generation rate to a sister company (First Generation), despite the availability of cheap and excess power from Napocor?

If we are to fix the power industry, this is where we should start: make sure that the efficient plants are dispatched first, and the captive customers pay only for the cheapest supply available in the market.

Confusion in the industry is not helped at all by an ill-disguised power-grab by the proponents and sponsors of Executive Order No. 474, which creates a Philippine Strategic, Oil, Gas, Energy Resources and Power Infrastructure Office (Psogerpio), supposedly to address a looming power crisis and to attract investors in a Napocor fire sale.

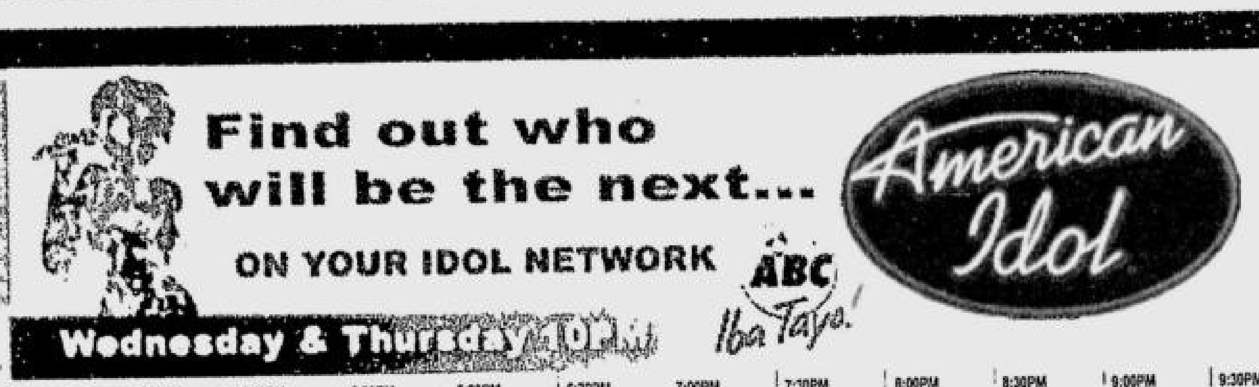
Before we think of reinventing the wheel and creating new offices with kilometric names (but with vague and short-sighted mandates), let us make sure that the present consumer safeguards work. We need a third wheel in power like we need to pay for electricity we did not even consume.

Incidentally, the market reception of the First Generation IPO, which fell far short of its twice-scaled-down valuation, was reportedly cold because of the delayed privatization of Napocor assets. If true, then there is indeed poetic justice.

Finally, before the government puts those power plants on the auction block, it should first determine the equity of consumers in those assets, as a consequence of the PPA charges. (Remember, the obnoxious PPA charges have cost captive electricity consumers an arm and a leg.) For all we know, consumers may already own those assets in the light of Napocor's mere 5-percent equity. And under open access or an open market, we could supply ourselves with our own cheap power.

—PETE L. ILAGAN,
president, National Association
of Electricity Consumers for Reforms,
10 Bayside Court Compound,
680 Quirino Ave., Tambo, Parañaque City

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
TV GUIDE
Thursday, February 23, 2006



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Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5			WNCAA (Rerun)		Barclay's EPL		Goals		Sentro	Mumbai Thrillers	S.O.S		Wala Yan Sa Lolo Ko		Big News	American Idol			
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema			Pasion de Amor	Little Amy	Mr. Bean	Naruto	Amazing Twins		TV Patrol World	Gulong Ng Palad	Mga Anghel Na Walang Langit	Princess Lulu	Pinoy Big Brother		Maalaala Mo Kaya			Insider
AXN		CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (Season 6)		CSI: Miami (Season II)		30 Seconds To Fame	Samsung Sports World	Lost		Numbers (Season I)		Fear Factor				The World's Scariest Explosions Caught On Tape		The Contender	
Cartoon Network	Johnny Bravo	Dexter's Laboratory	Tom & Jerry Show		Baby Looney Tunes	Codename: Kids Next Door	Foster's Home For Imaginary Friends	The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	Power Rangers Wild Force	The Gransazers	Battle B-Daman	Energy Bomb	X-Men Evolution	Samurai Jack	Justice League	Static Shock	Power Rangers Wild Force	The Gransazers
Cinema One		Super Inday And D Golden Bibe				Pangako Ng Puso				Sambahin Ang Ngalan Mo				Dyesebel				Babae Sa Bintana	
Cinemax				Sleepers					The Naked Gun From The Files Of Police Squad!			No Secrets			Hulk				Buffalo Soldiers (11:45PM)
CNN				Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International		World News Asia		World News	World Sport Global Office CNN Business Traveller	World News Asia		World News	World Sport
Discovery Channel		Secrets To Survival		The Greatest Ever		Building The Ultimate		The Future Is Wild		Extreme Engineering		We Built This City		Mythbusters		The Greatest Ever		Power Zone	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Un-[illegible] Bunny	Mickey Mouse and Friends	Lilo & Stitch	Sabrina, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			Lizzie Mcguire		Mickey Mouse and Friends	Chip N Dale's Rescue Ranger	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN		Pro Billiards '04 Trick Shot Magic NY USA		Pro Billiards '03 BCA Open 9-Ball C'ships SFin		Winter X Games Classic CO USA	Winter X Games Classic CO USA	In The Driver's Seat	Pool/ Snooker Mosconi Cup 2005		Sportscenter Asia	Pool/ Snooker Mosconi Cup 2005		Winter X Games Classic	Pool/ Snooker Premier Snooker League 05				Sportscenter Asia
ETC		Who Wants To Marry My Dad 2		Change of Heart	Elimidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		Will & Grace 4	Friends 10	Queer Eye For The Straight Guy		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
EWTN	The Catholic Faith & Vatican II	Angelus (3:15 PM)	Virtue Storybook	Image Of God	Your Vocation: God's Call In Your Life	Rosary With Mother Angelica	Good Or Evil- Who Decides?	EWTN Gallery	Where God Weeps	EWTN Live (Encore) With Fr Mitch Pacwa		Catechisms And Controversies	The Word Was Made Flesh	Daily Mass (SAP) Live		Angelus (10:15PM)	St. Thomas More Faithful Statesman	The Journey Home Encore	
Fox News		Hannity & Colmes		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Fox & Friends						Fox News Live			
GMA 7	Kung Mamahalin Mo Lang Ako	Now and Forever	First Love Of A Royale Prince		Dragonball Z	Great Teacher Onizuka	Le Robe de Mariage	24 Oras		Extra Challenge	Ethora	Starstruck 3	My Name Is Kim Sam Soon	Jewel In The Palace		Magpakailanman			Saksi
Hallmark Channel	Bewitched	Sue Thomas F.B. Eye II		Royal Scandal (3:50 PM)			Who's The Boss? II	Bewitched	The Nanny	Strong Medicine		Judging Amy/McBride: It's Murder Madam			Judging Amy (10:35PM)		Strong Medicine (11:25PM)		
HBO	Wilder Days (2:45 PM)			Hell Squad (4:15 PM)			Bulletproof (5:45 PM)				Thoughtcrimes			The Flintstones (Movie)			Troy		
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		Home Shopping Network		ME TV		Japan Video Topics		Global Family Series	IBC News Tonite	Home Shopping Network	
JackTV	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	The Late Show With David Letterman		Smackdown				JLU	Just For Laughs (Gags)	Mad TV		That 70s Show	Arrested Development	The Late Show With David Letterman		The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Comedy Central Presents	South Park	The Man Show
Lifestyle Network	Secret Gardens	The Fix	Mission Organization	Carol Duvall	Molto Mario	Hot Off The Grill	Good Eats	Extreme Cuisine	Unwrapped	Tyler's Ultimate	E! News Weekend		Life Is Great With Brooke Burke	Life & Style		Your Private Island	Genuine Article	E! True Hollywood Story	
MTV Philippines	MTV Hits	MTV Cribs	MTV Hits		Pimp My Ride	Pop Inc.		Handpicked: Mick Foley	MTV Hits			Bling # 102	Get Spotted	TRL		Punk'D	Brand New	Tayo Na Ba? Love and Sex Decoded	VH1 Video Collections
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYX News	MYX Firsts	Star MYX	MYXILOG	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		MYX Presents		MYX Bandarito	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX
National Geographic	Wild Family Secrets	Megastructures		Strange Days On Planet Earth		Edge Of Universe		Top 5 - Mysterious Universe		Wow!		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Megastructures 3: Dubai's Palm Island		Strange Days On Planet Earth	
NBN		Value Vision		New Life TV Shopping		Teledyaryo	Diyos Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Sila?	Tinig ng Bayan (Live)				Teledyaryo				Network Forum		Banyan OCW With Susan K	
Nickelodeon	Chalkzone	Hey Arnold!	Rocket Power	Four Eyes	My Life As A Teenage Robot	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	The Fairly Odd Parents	Drake & Josh	Naturally Sadie	Romeo	All That	All Grown Up	As Told By Ginger	Four Eyes	My Life As A Teenage Robot	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	The Fairly Odd Parents	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Atabang Girls				Dugo Sa Plungi Ng Buwan				Annie B.				Pusong Mamon				Fight Night 4
Qtv	Ikaw Lang Ang Mamahalin		Striker Hungry Heart	The Prince Of Tennis	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Love Al Angsan Sub	Irene	Mars	Laugh To Laugh: Ang Kulit	O, Mare Ko		News On Q	Women's Desk		MINT (Music Interactive)	Polka Hour
RPN 9	TV Shopping		Defenders Of The Earth	Global Window				Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	WWE Smackdown		The Ultimate Fighter		Revelations		Newswatch Now	Just For Laughs (Gags)	Kasangga Mo Ang Langit	
SBN 21				New Life TV Shopping				Winner TV Shopping				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Friends Again		SBN Music Video	
Solar Sports		2005 IBF HK Badminton Finals MS. MatchD					NBA Game Celtics @ Jazz					NBA Game Magic @ Nets					Sportsdesk	All-England Finals	
Sports Plus	NBA Game Golden State @ Sacramento					WGC-Accenture Match Play Preview Show			Slipstream	SMB Poker Bar Tour Finals				World Game		Ray Ban Celebrity Poker Challenge			
Star Movies			Snatch			Small Soldiers (6:15 PM)				The Quick And The Dead				Armageddon					The Clown Payday
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		Angel		American Idol 2005		Star News Asia	Friends (Series 10)	American Idol 2005		2006 48th Annual Grammy Awards Live!				Friends (Series 10)	American Idol 2005
Studio 23		Yugioh Duel Monster		UAAP				Batman Beyond	Spirits	Wazzup Wazzup	The Contender		Alias (8:20 PM)	Desperate Housewives		News Central	Oprah		Salt

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E-mail: pr_provincial_news@inquirer.com.ph

INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Editor **Jun Bandayrel**
Bureau Chief **Floreño G. Solmirano**

Helping Mindoreños help themselves

By Madonna Virola
City of Calapan

THE CHINESE-FILIPINOS' pervasive presence in Oriental Mindoro is felt not only in the business sector but also in those whose lives they have touched. As individuals or as a group, the Tsinoys have made a difference in the life of others in the province.

Manilyn Manigbas, a city education officer, recounts that during the floods in Calapan in December 2005, the Chinese-Filipino Chamber of Commerce was among the first to provide an efficient relief assistance.

Paulina Magnaye remembers losing her entire family, including her husband and four children, to the 1994 floods in Bucayao River.

To this day, she has not forgotten the face of the Chinese who offered his arms and saved her from getting drowned in that incident. "I am very grateful to that Chinese, whose name I don't even know," she said.

Selfless

Giving has enriched his soul, said Jan Ong, who has quietly initiated a scholarship fund for a group of mothers called "Inangs."

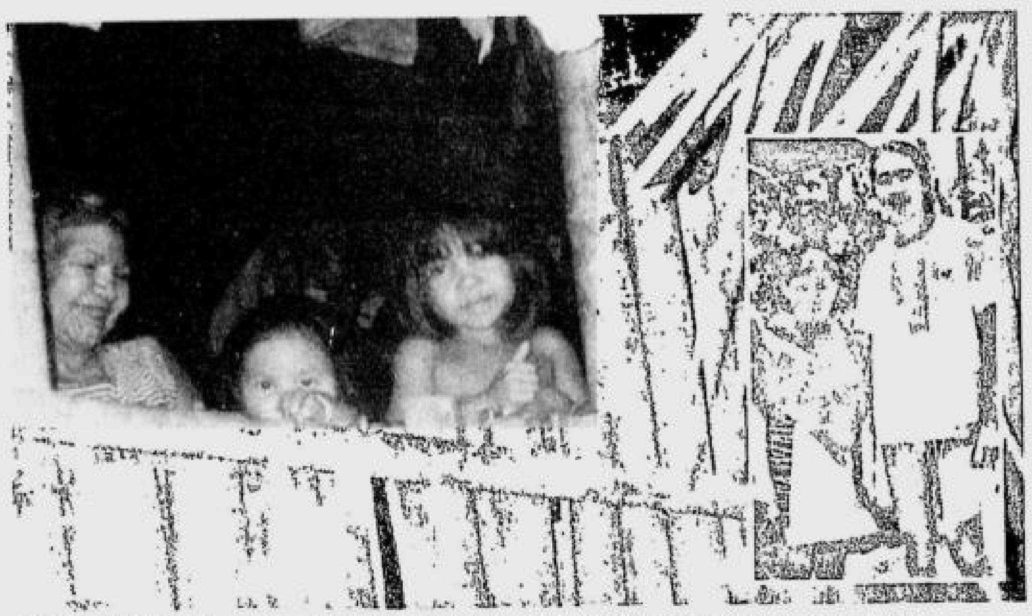
"They really need support because they are more determined to finish school, given that they have a family of their own," he said of the mothers housed at the back of the Mangyan Mission office in the city.

An expert in water studies, Ong has served the Mangyan folk for many decades and is a Ten Outstanding Young Men awardee for community service.

As a gesture of his solidarity with the Mangyan, he dons a g-string in some of his treks to the mountain.

Ong has trained communities in Calapan on the use of the geo-positioning system in mapping their ancestral lands and mining sites.

"Many scholarships are for non-married individuals," he noted.



CHARITY FIRST has helped the family of Alangan-Mangyan Sabel Taywan through a scholarship for Sabel (left, inset). TOYM Jan Ong (right) has linked the group of Tsinoy businessmen to Sabel.
MADONNA T. VIROLA

But Ong has found a way to help the "unmarried" get an education. For instance, he has linked Sabel Taywan, an Alangan-Mangyan, with Charity First Foundation Inc. (CFFI), a Quezon City-based group composed mostly of Tsinoy businessmen.

Charity first

"I never thought I could take up an education course because of our poverty," related Sabel.

More than the material resources they donate, CFFI members are involved in the projects, the scholarship program among them, where seminars providing skills and inculcating values are integrated.

Sabel attended one of these seminars called "Emerging the Hero from Within," to give her the right framework in realizing her dreams.

"Success cannot be attained if values are rotten," said Bonifacio Co, one of CFFI's founders.

Families of scholars are carefully screened, with CFFI members visiting them in the mountains.

"Because most of their problems are [family-related], we really talk with the parents during the screening," added Co.

Parents of the scholars also get to attend seminars in Manila, with travel guides provided by CFFI, so they could understand their children's goal of getting an education.

Cristina Guarde, a BS Social Work student in St. Bridget's College in Batangas, is another Mangyan CFFI scholar.

"It would have been impossible for me to reach college without CFFI whose values formation program I find so encouraging," she said.

Since it started in 2001, the foundation has awarded scholarships to more than 300 students all over the country.

Almost 80 scholars have graduated, 15 of them cum laudes, at the University of the Philippines, Technological University of the Philippines, Polytechnic University of the Philippines and Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila.

The CFFI has also initiated "Sagip Ngipin, Ngiting Kayganda" dental program, one of which was held in Silang, Cavite with the cooperation of the Adventist University in 2004.

It has also conducted a reconstructive surgery mission for indigent patients with cleft palate and one of these was "Sponsor a Smile" in Albay in 2004.

Other services have included providing cataract operations and conducting a campaign on waste management.

Beyond dole-out

CFFI was organized four years ago when the members, who were meeting almost every night for a year in Dean's Street Café in Quezon City, realized they should go beyond dole-out.

"We realized it was not enough to provide relief to calamity-stricken areas. It would be better if we went to the far-flung and inaccessible areas ourselves," Boni said.

From 8-10 core group members, they are now about 30 active members. Some founding members belong to Tzu Chi, a Buddhist group that practices compassion.

CFFI believes in the core values of harmony, humility, helpfulness and honesty.

"I admire their generosity of going beyond themselves, which means giving back while they're on top," said Harvey Keh, executive director (on leave) of Pathways Foundation, one of CFFI's partner organizations with their scholars' community at the Payatas dumping site, also being served by Pathways.

CFFI helps people help themselves and is also a trustee of people who want to share their resources.

"For only 2,400 per month, interested donors can support a college student while for P10,000 a month, a cataract patient can have a vision," added Boni.

When asked by scholars how they can pay back, CFFI says: "Finish your education and follow your dreams."

"And we don't actually feel we're giving much because the learning that we get is hundredfold. We actually receive more in terms of happiness and peace of mind. It's very difficult to quantify," said Boni.

Rescuers asked: Don't stop digging

By Delfin Mallari Jr.
Lucena City

ONE OF THE SURVIVORS OF a collapsed building during the 2004 calamity in northern Quezon has appealed to search and rescue groups not to lose hope and continue searching for survivors in Barangay Guinsaugon, St. Bernard town in Southern Leyte.

"I broke into tears when I first saw the television footages. I can feel the hopelessness and desperation of those persons beneath the mud especially the cries of anguish of the children. I've been in that kind of pitiful situation before," said Maria Tamares. She stopped trying to contain her tears.

"God will help them (landslide victims) survive just like the way He helped us stay alive," Tamares, 50, said in a phone interview from her house in Barangay Tignoan, Real, Quezon.

At the height of the storm on the evening of Nov. 29, 2004, more than a hundred villagers sought shelter inside the two-story Repador building, thinking it could protect them from the swelling flood.

But an avalanche of mud and water from the hilly portion across the road knocked the structure down and buried all the occupants.

Tamares, along with her 3-year-old granddaughter Stella Marie and two other boys, were saved by rescuers 10 days after.

President Macapagal-Arroyo called the rescue a "miracle."

For 10 days, the survivors spent every minute in the wet and dark space only half a meter high and just enough for them to lie down.

There was no food but the four survived—on prayers and water that the children collected from a plastic pail.

The first sight of the television footage on the landslide in the farming village of Guinsaugon in St. Bernard immediately made Melvin Sur, father of Stella Marie, cry as he embraced his daughter.

"I see myself in the worried, desperate faces of the families of the landslide victims. I can feel their present agony while they wait for any bit of news in hopes that their loved ones will be pulled out alive. The wait is tormenting," he said.

"During those agonizing moments, there was no one we could turn to except God. And I'm sure, those presently trapped beneath the mountain of mud in St. Bernard have also been praying hard. Their prayers will help them, just trust the Lord," Tamares said.

Upon learning of the St. Bernard tragedy, Tamares immediately lit a candle and offered prayers for the landslide victims of St. Bernard.

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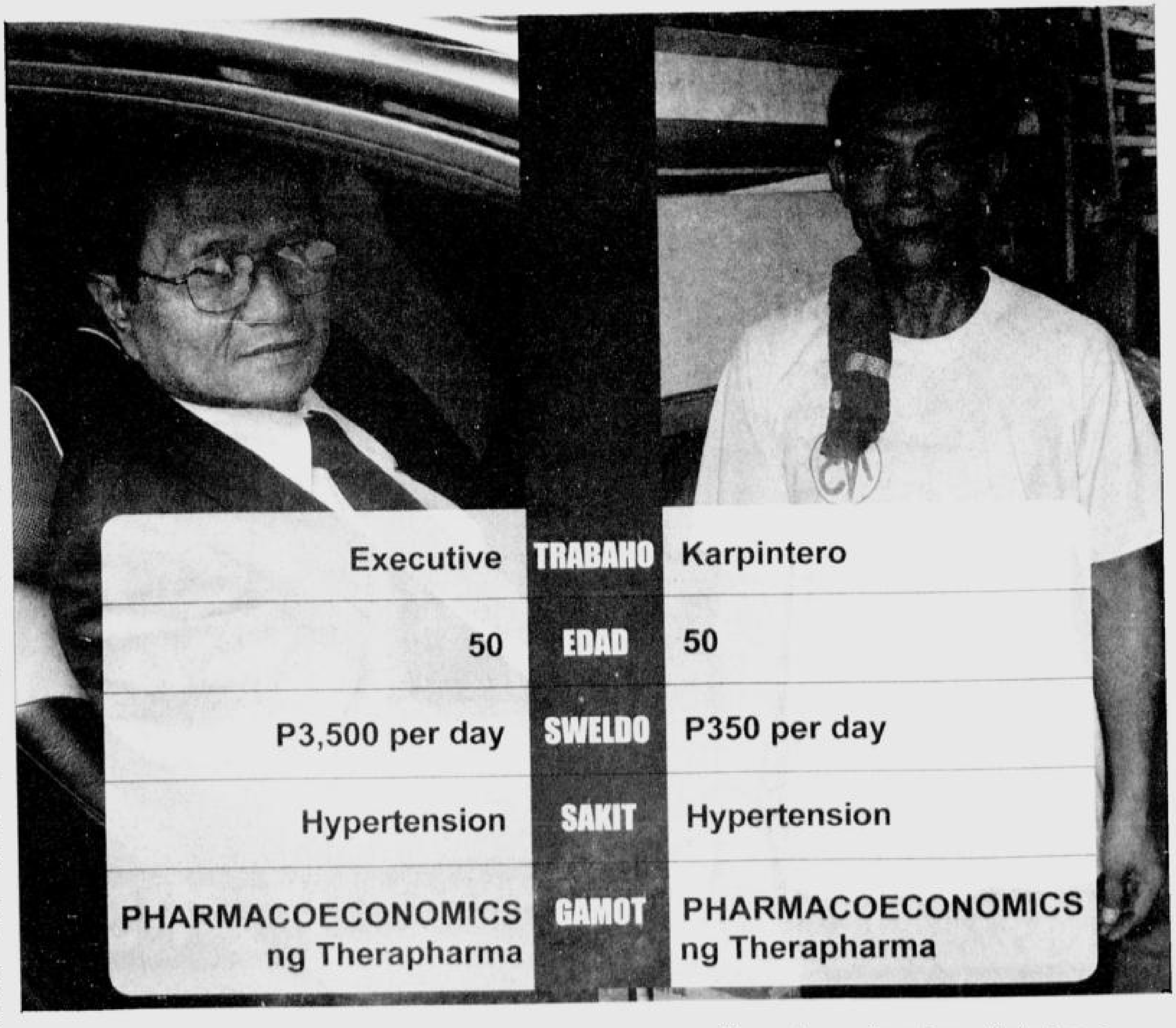

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GMA urged: Stop rape of Sierra Madre

LUCENA CITY—MEMBERS OF THE PROVINCIAL board of Quezon urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to order a stop to the continued destruction of forests in the Sierra Madre.

The officials made the appeal after watching video footage of illegal logging in the mountain range.

"President Arroyo should order an immediate investigation to stop this despicable activity. She should also revoke all logging permits in the area," Board Member Vicente Alcala said in a privilege speech.

"We should all work together here to avoid another deadly disaster like what we have experienced and is now being experienced by the people in Leyte," Alcala said.

While the video footage was being shown, Fr. Pete Montallana, chair of Task Force Sierra Madre-Infanta, appealed to the board members to help the people in Real-Infanta-General Nakar area stop the continuous destruction of the mountain.

The video footage was taken last week by three Agta tribe members and a representative from the Catholic Church inside Sierra Madre.

Featured in the footage were newly cut trees, mostly hardwood species.

"The DENR has dared us to prove our claim that illegal logging is back. This video will tell us all," said Demosthenes Reynera, deputy coordinator of the Social Action Center of Infanta.

Antonio Principe, DENR regional executive director, said he castigated Emrich Borja, DENR Quezon chief, for pinning the blame on Manila-based environment officials.

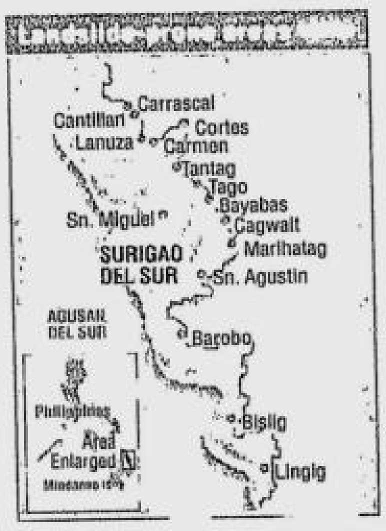
"That's wrong. He (Penro Borja) should not free himself from any responsibility as if we're not coordinating with each other. He knows everything. He should not absolve himself," Principe said. He did not elaborate.

On Monday, after admitting that the unlawful cutting of trees was back in the Sierra Madre, Borja said his office could not do anything because DENR officials in Manila issued logging permits in the Sierra Madre.

But Principe reiterated the DENR position that what was found in Sierra Madre was a simple case of "timber poaching" and not "illegal logging."

"Logging operation involves the use of heavy equipment and construction of roads. Apparently, what have been discovered were incidents of timber poaching," he said. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Landslide fear forces Zambo folk's evacuation



PAGADIAN CITY—LOCAL OFFICIALS and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) ordered residents of a village in Bayog, Zamboanga del Sur to evacuate for fear of another landslide.

Ernesto Adobo Jr., regional director of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), said at least 40 families in Sitio Balabag in the village of Dipore had to be evacuated since the area is prone to landslides.

The decision to evacuate was made after a meeting with local officials and members of the local disaster coordinating council, Adobo said.

On Feb. 18, five people were killed while three houses were buried in mud when a landslide hit a small-scale mining area in Sitio Balabag.

There are at least 7,000 residents in Sitio Balabag, but only 40 families are living in the slopes.

Zamboanga del Sur is not included in the Mines and Geosciences Bureau's list of 10 landslide-prone provinces.

But Adobo said he directed his men to assess if there are areas in the region which are prone to flood and landslides that are not in the list.

Milabel Alia, local environment and natural resources officer, said miners cannot be given a permit to operate because Zamboanga Mineral Corp. and the Toronto Ventures Inc. are currently holding permits to explore the area.

Alia said illegal miners continued with their operations because local officials won't stop them.

Rudy Arpon of Earthlink, a Church-based environmental organization, said illegal miners cannot be forced to leave the area because of politicians.

Arpon also urged the government to cancel all exploration permits given to mining firms.

"The onslaught of La Niña poses great danger to communities where there are mining operations," Arpon said.

In Surigao del Sur, the MGB has listed 50 barangays in 15 towns as landslide-prone areas.

Alilo Ensomo Jr., MGB director for the Caraga, said in a letter to Gov. Vicente Pimentel Jr. that the list was based on previous assessments made by the MGB.

Ensomo said the villages are in the towns of Barobo, Bayabas, Bislig, Cagwait, Cantilan, Carmen, Carrascal, Cortes, Lanuza, Lingig, Mahihatag, San Agustin, San Miguel, Tago and Tandag. *Michael Sarcauga and Bert Pacate, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Travel on landslide-prone highway banned

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—THE Department of Public Works and Highways continued to enforce the travel ban along the Aurora side of the Bongabon (Nueva Ecija)-Baler Highway as mild rains hit the area.

Ramon Aquino, DPWH director in Central Luzon, said they were issuing the advice early to prevent loss of lives along the highway's 61.2-km landslide-prone sections.

"Definitely, travel is not allowed," said Aquino.

Various hills there have been left bare by the landslides in 2004 and 2005 and some concrete portions of the road have eroded grounds underneath, he said on Tuesday.

The Villa Maria segment in Maria Aurora town is particularly dangerous as two rivers bound the area. Floodwaters and mountain debris washed out the bridge there in December 2004, killing five people, three of whom were DPWH personnel clearing the road.

The DPWH maintained the ban after weather experts deemed the country's eastern seaboard, where Aurora is located, to be vulnerable to stronger and destructive typhoons because of the La Niña weather phenomenon.

Aquino said commuters should take the safer Pantabangan-Canili Road on their way to Aurora.

He said the DPWH has also released P10 million for the desilting of the Santo Tomas River and the raising of the Maculcul Bridge in San Felipe, Zambales.

Last year's lahar flows left the bridge with a zero freeboard. The bridge is the link to the province's northern towns and Pangasinan.

In Pampanga, the DPWH and Rep. Anna York Bondoc have begun scouting a site for an evacuation center for some 1,000 families living along the critical portions of the Pampanga River's Arnedo Dike.

Aquino said families needed to be moved out when water overflows from the river, which is the main drainer of 30 rivers in Central Luzon. Recent floods sent waters as deep as 10 feet in San Luis town, the provincial disaster coordinating council's data showed.

The Department of Education, according to Aquino, has been asked to identify schools that are safe for temporary refuge.

Mitigating floods took a notch up in the DPWH's priority after President Macapagal-Arroyo last week ordered the agency to study the river systems of Cagayan Valley and Mt. Pinatubo, he said.

The agency, he said, was given six months to complete the study for a "holistic flood-mitigating program" in those areas. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Taiwanese released

CAMP OLIVAS, PAMPANGA—Policemen on Wednesday rescued in Cabangan, Zambales, a Taiwanese couple abducted at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport on Monday.

The rescue of Liu Kou-Shi, 56, and Liu Hoduan Chin, 59, came after they jumped out of the window of a house that the suspects had rented at the Galinato Beach Resort in Cabangan, said Chief Supt. Alejandro Lapinid, Central Luzon police director.

Lapinid said the Lius sought the help of Genaro Ofunda, barangay captain of Felmida-Diaz, at 6:30 a.m. Wednesday. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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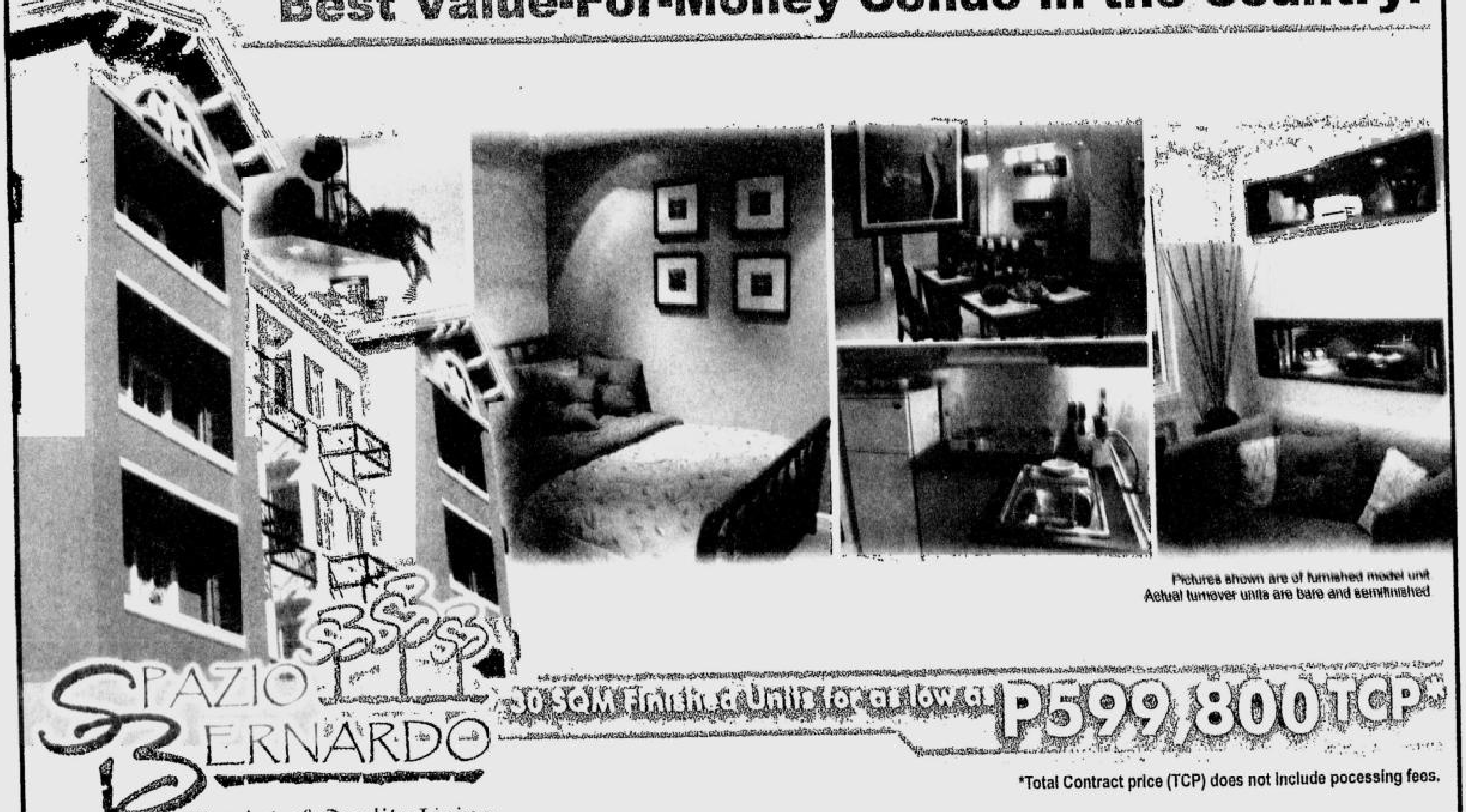

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Tondo gang suspects face slay charges

By Margaux C. Ortiz

MURDER CHARGES HAVE BEEN FILED against 17 men, with ages ranging from 25 years old and below, for allegedly killing a man in Tondo, Manila last year.

National Bureau of Investigation Interpol Supervising Agent Dominador Villanueva III said yesterday that the suspects, most of whom live in Tondo, are members of the True Blue Style Gang. "The suspects, mostly aged 25 and below, are mostly out of school youth and relatives of policemen and barangay officials," the NBI official said, adding that the alleged group leader, Virgilio Cuevas Jr., is reportedly a criminology student.

The group had been "a serious community problem" for the past three years, terrorizing their neighbor through constant gang wars, Villanueva said. The charges against the suspects were filed in the Manila City Prosecutor's Office.

An investigation by the NBI Interpol Division headed by Regional Director Ricardo Diaz showed that the suspects killed Noel Villagracia, 41, of Barangay Obrero, Tondo on Nov. 17, 2005.

Villagracia and three companions were walking on Limay Street when they chanced upon the suspects. Sensing that a gang war was about to erupt between the True Blue Style group and a rival gang, Villagracia warned the suspects from pushing through with their plan.

This reportedly offended the True Blue members who allegedly shot Villagracia with .38 caliber revolvers, an NBI report said. One suspect, identified as Romeo Gemzon Jr., then allegedly took out a sword and slashed the victim's throat, the report added.

The victim was rushed to the Chinese General Hospital where he was declared dead on arrival.

No bombs found at DILG building after 2 calls

By DJ Yap

TWO BOMB THREATS THAT TURNED out to be hoaxes were reported at the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) building in Quezon City yesterday.

The threats allegedly came from the same group, the Young Officers Union of the New Generation (YOUNG), that claimed responsibility for the blast which occurred in Malacañang on Feb. 20.

According to Edsel Estellena, an executive assistant at the Office of the DILG Secretary, he received a call from a man at 11:45 a.m. telling him that there was a bomb in the building.

"This is YOUNG Alyansa. Vacate the building in 10 minutes. A bomb will explode," the man told him before he hung up, Estellena told reporters.

Estellena quickly relayed the information to DILG watchmen who called in the explosives and ordinance division of the Quezon City Police District.

At 12:40 p.m., police Insp. Arnulfo Franco said his men found no suspicious materials in the building and declared it was safe for the employees to return to their posts.

Another bomb threat was called in at 1:15 p.m. by a Captain Maglaya who also identified himself as a member of the Alyansa YOUNG. Like the first one, the threat turned out to be a hoax.

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Sexual harassment at DOJ

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

DESPITE THEIR HIGH EDUCATION, SOME men don't care about the consequences of their inappropriate behavior.

A woman prosecutor assigned at the office of Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez has complained about being sexually harassed by another prosecutor. Olivia V. Non, who holds the rank of state prosecutor II, claims that Prosecuting Attorney Alexander Q. Suarez grabbed her, tried to kiss her on the lips and touched her left breast on Feb. 8, 2006.

Non holds a higher position than Suarez in the DOJ totem pole.

In a letter to Secretary Gonzalez, Non said that a few days after that incident took place in her office, she received several text messages on her cellular phone.

The woman prosecutor quoted some of the messages, thus: "Hi, U at home? *Alam n b ni RG .mga* secrets *mo* (Does Raul Gonzalez know your secrets)? *Wag ka nang magmalinis. Dami mong sabit.* Quiet *ka lang sis* (Don't pretend to be clean. You have many shortcomings. Just keep quiet, sis)."

"*Ssbog white pper tungkol sau. Lahat ng basura llbas namin.* (A white paper will be written about you. We will expose all your garbage.) Non said the messages were sent through cellular phone no. 0921-5233627.

Secretary Gonzalez had better act on Non's complaint so outsiders would not say that sexual harassment is tolerated in the Department of Justice.

* * *

The Senate committee has forwarded to the Office of the Ombudsman the results of its investigation into the alleged misuse of P724 million in funds under the farm and implements program of the Department of Agriculture.

It's high time everybody held his peace until the Office of the Ombudsman has concluded its investigation and filed appropriate charges in court, if warranted.

On the other hand, it's time that the main subject of the inquiry—former Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn 'Joc-Joc" Bolante—came home to face the music, so to speak.

I may not really like the way Bolante looks. He could be more corrupt than some involved in shenanigans in this government for all I care. But my feelings don't, and shouldn't count. Bolante could be guilty as sin. But judgment must be withheld until his side in the sordid affair is heard.

All this, in the interest of fairness and in the fulfillment of the time-honored legal precept of presuming the innocence of an accused until proven otherwise.

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Application for eligibility may be secured from the Secretariat, Port District Security Bids and Award Committee (PDSBAC) at PPA-PD- Visayas, CIP Complex, North Reclamation Area Cebu City from February 24, 2006 to March 6, 2006. Bid documents can be obtained after payment for non-refundable fee of Php 2,000.00 only after having been qualified. Sealed bid shall be submitted to the PDSBAC Secretariat with bid security equivalent to the amount prescribed below:

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1. Deadline for submission of application for eligibility and to bid - March 14, 2006
2. Deadline for submission of bids (to be announced later)

Opening of bids shall follow immediately thereafter.

PPA reserves the right to reject any or all application to pre-qualify and to bid without any reason, waive any defect therein, and accept the offer most advantageous to the Authority.

(Sgd.) RAUL T. SANTOS
Port District Manager
PDSBAC Chairman

(PDI—Feb. 16 & 23, 2006)

Makati rallies under tight watch

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE SOUTHERN POLICE DISTRICT (SPD) yesterday activated Task Group Ayala, a group of policemen tasked to watch over rallies commemorating Edsa I in Makati City, until Saturday.

"Task Group Ayala was created purposely for the celebration of Edsa I. This is composed of policemen from all stations within the SPD area of responsibility," said Supt. Felipe Napoles Jr., Makati Police Department operations chief.

Members of the task group include the Special Weapons and Tactics unit, the Civil Disturbance Management contingent and intelligence operatives.

Napoles said only two events are scheduled tomorrow—a march along Ayala Avenue and a wreath-laying ceremony at the Ninoy Aquino Monument. Both were organized by Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay who also heads the United Opposition.

Traffic along Ayala Avenue, from Gil Puyat to Paseo de Roxas, will be closed starting at noon to give way to the wreath-laying ceremony. A section of Paseo de Roxas, from Dela Rosa to Sedeno Street, will also be closed to vehicles. The roads will be reopened after the event.

Personalities who played a role in Edsa 1 are expected to attend the event, including former President Corazon Aquino.

Napoles said no other organization has applied for a permit to hold a rally in Makati, although the police were expecting other groups to hold protests in the area without informing City Hall.

Should this happen, the police have been ordered to implement the calibrated preemptive response (CPR) policy.

Napoles said Task Group Ayala will be disbanded as soon as the rallies commemorating Edsa I are over.

The entire Makati police force, however, will remain on full alert, along with other police districts in Metro Manila, amid reports of a coup threat.

METROBRIEFS

Edsa heroes honored

THE MANILA government yesterday unveiled a memorial marker to honor the city's martyrs who strove to restore freedom and democracy during the Marcos dictatorship that was toppled by the first Edsa People Power Revolt 20 years ago. The "Dambana ng Kabayanihan" marker was unveiled at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines in Sta. Mesa, Manila where hundreds of militant students were arrested and detained following the declaration of martial law. Part of the marker's inscription reads: "Nawa'y magsilbi itong paalala sa mga susunod na henerasyon na ang Demokrasya ay ipinagtatanggol at ipinaglalaban." (Let this serve as a reminder to future generations that Democracy should be defended and fought for). "This is Manila's way of celebrating our own Edsa heroes," said Mayor Lito Atienza, who led the ceremony.

Tina G. Santos

Woman killed in fire

A WOMAN was killed while P2-million worth of property was lost in a fire caused by an unattended candle in Mandaluyong City Tuesday night. Aniana Diameda, 73, was killed in the three-hour fire at a crowded community in Barangay Poblacion, FO2 Victorio Tablay told the INQUIRER. Some residents in the area were already sleeping when the fire broke out at 10:30 p.m. Inside the house rented by Dionito and Angela Alipaste. Because most of the houses in the government-owned lot were made of light materials, the fire quickly spread, FO2 Marcos Cabiso said. Fire fighters finally managed to put out the blaze at 12:55 a.m. What made their job harder was the presence of residents who crowded the narrow alleys in the area, carrying their television sets, washing machines and clothes to safety.

Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

SLEx rerouting set

PARTS of the Sales Interchange on the South Luzon Expressway (SLEx) will be closed to motorists from 11 p.m. to 4 a.m., Monday to Wednesday next week, the PNCC Skyway Corporation (PSC) announced yesterday. On Monday, northbound motorists headed to Pasay City should take the Sales Bridge toward Villamor Air Base while traffic to Makati and Manila will be diverted to Pasong Tamo Extension. On Tuesday, northbound traffic going to Pasay City will be rerouted to C-5 Road and Sales Bridge to Villamor Air Base. Makati and Manila-bound motorists, on the other hand, should take the East Service Road to Pasong Tamo Extension while motorists headed to Mandaluyong and Pasig cities should use the C-5 Road. On Wednesday, southbound motorists from Pasay City should pass through the West Service Road to Bicutan while those coming from the Magallanes area will be rerouted to the Sales Loop to the East and West Service Roads toward Bicutan. Romerico Reganit, PSC vice president, said the traffic rerouting was scheduled to give way to work on the Department of Public Works and Highways' flyover project in the Sales area. Traffic enforcers will be deployed and appropriate signs will be installed in strategic areas to assist motorists, he added.

Jocelyn R. Uy

Equitable PCI BANK
Your Bank of Choice
A STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE BOARD

22 February 2006

To Our Valued Clients and Friends,

I would like to take this opportunity to address you, our loyal clients and friends, and to thank you for your continued trust and patronage of Equitable PCI Bank. In the meeting of the Bank's Board of Directors last February 21, 2006, my fellow Directors unanimously gifted me with their vote of confidence and elected me as Chairperson of the Board. I thank my fellow Directors for this generous show of support and I am confident that the Board will continue to be united in pursuing the Bank's objectives. I gratefully accept this responsibility and I assure all our clients, our employees, and the various stakeholders of Equitable PCI Bank that I will exert all efforts to ensure and protect their interests. Ever since I took over the leadership of the Social Security System in 2001, I have been determined to introduce reforms in the System and to ensure its long-term viability. I would like to believe that my being President of the SSS coupled with my experience as Chairman and Senior Partner of one of the largest public accounting firms in the country have equipped me to provide a focused and transparent leadership at Equitable PCI Bank. Since I am a non-executive Chairman, the Bank will continue to be run by its Management Team which has enabled it to progress under a professional environment.

Equitable PCI Bank has made tremendous strides in its operating and financial performance in the past several years. Recently, the Bank reported a 30% improvement in net income for 2005 based on unaudited financial statements. The Bank continues to progress under an improving economy with a government focused on economic reforms. Our national leadership led by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo has shown the way through strong political will and a steeled determination for our economy to move forward. Our recent upgraded ratings from two international credit rating agencies and CALPERS have evidenced the upward trend that could not have been achieved had our President taken the easy way out.

I would like to end this message by again thanking all of you for your continued support for Equitable PCI Bank and I assure you that we continue to be ready in providing you and the banking public with the excellent and responsive service that we have been known for.

Thank you for making us your Bank of Choice!

CORAZON S. DE LA PAZ
Chairperson of the Board
Equitable PCI Bank

ADVT.

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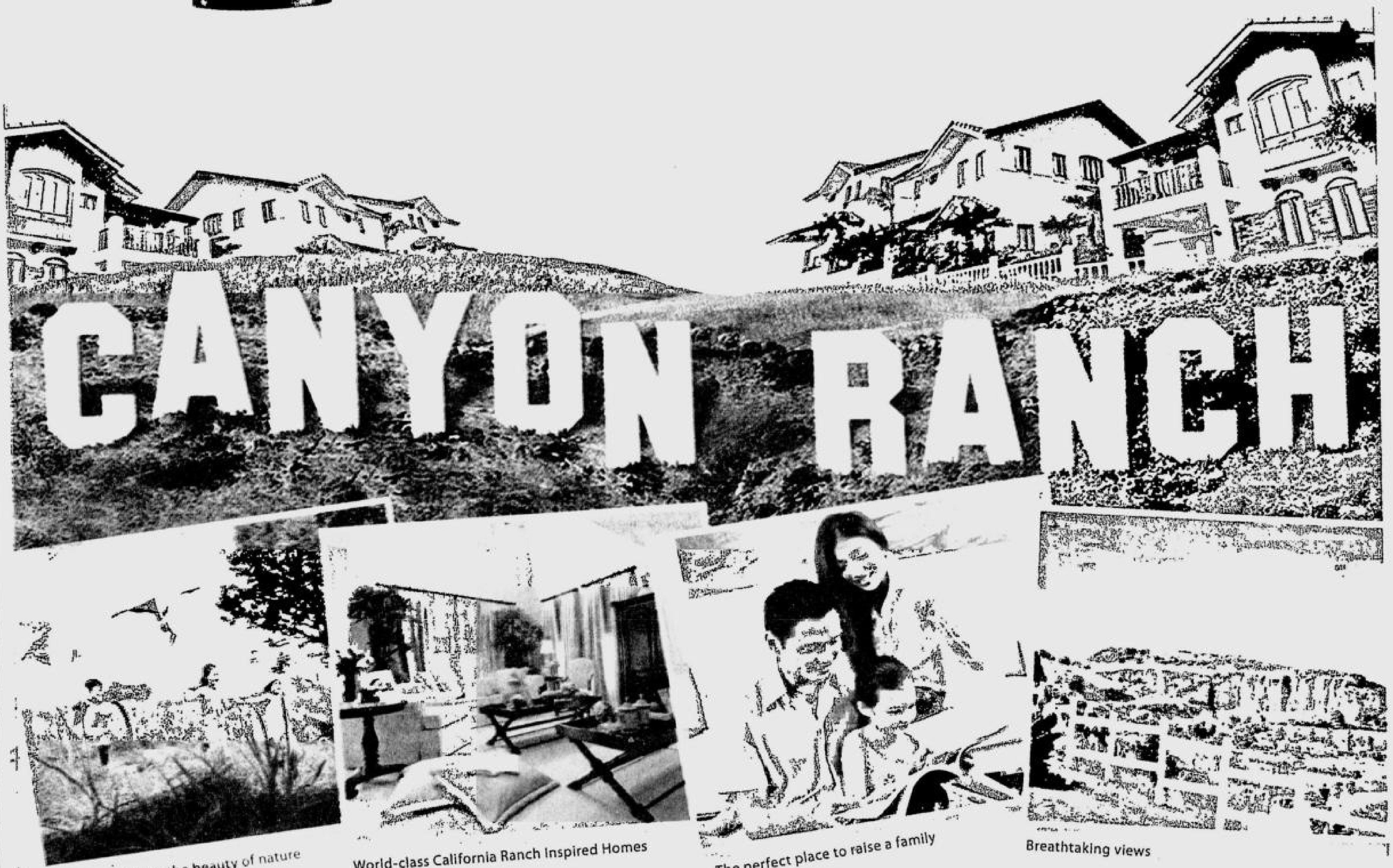

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FEB. 23, 1986, DAY II

By PDI Research

Midnight

Thousands heed Jaime Cardinal Sin's and also Butz's call over Radio Veritas to gather around Camps Aguinaldo and Crame and protect rebels led by Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile, Armed Forces Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Fidel Ramos and Reform the Armed Forces Movement (RAM).

Metropolitan Command head Maj. Gen. Prospero Olivas tells President Marcos he is incapable of dispersing crowds at Edsa. He also defies Marcos' order to call Army commander Maj. Gen. Josephus Ramas for reinforcements.

1 a.m.

Marcos presents on government Channel 4 alleged assassin Maj. Saulito Aromin.

1:45 a.m.

Supreme Court Justice Nestor Alampay resigns.

3 a.m.

AFP chief Fabian Ver gathers his men in Fort Bonifacio and appoints Ramas, his protégé, to lead assault on Aguinaldo and Crame.

Enrile urges Aquino to announce her government as duly elected President. Sin goes on air to ask Marcos and Ver not to use violence.

4 a.m.

In Washington, US Secretary of State George Shultz assembles a few of his men, including former Ambassador to the Philippines Michael Armacost, to come up with a firm policy on the Philippines.

5:30 a.m.

Marcos loyalist troops destroy Radio Veritas' transmitter in Bulacan, limiting its reach to Luzon.

Marine commander Gen. Artemio Tadiar is stunned to learn that Ramas, who has little combat experience, has been assigned to lead attack on rebels. Tadiar and his men are standing guard in Malacañang.

Aquino, still in Cebu, turns down Assemblyman Ramon Mitra's offer to bring her to Palawan, and decides to return to Manila.

Mass is celebrated inside Crame. Outside on Edsa, people continue to arrive, some on foot. Human barricades are further fortified.

8 a.m.

After waiting for three hours for permission to withdraw his troops from Palace, Tadiar shouts at Ramas: "This is insane! I am still waiting for permission to move troops, yet you are ready to move out!"

Marcos orders Col. Antonio Sotelo, commander of Air Force 15th Strike Wing based at Sangley Point, to disable helicopters in Crame. With no one volunteering to carry out attack, Sotelo discusses with his men plan to fight alongside Enrile-Ramos troops.

11 a.m.

Aquino holds brief press conference in Cebu asking people to support the military rebels and calling on Marcos to step down.

Noon

Marcos men present at the presidential table include Presidential Executive Assistant Juan C. Tuvera, Agrarian Reform Minister Conrado Estrella, Public Works Minister Jesus Hipolito, Food Administrator Jesus Tanchangco, Agriculture Minister Salvador Escudero III, Education Minister Jaime C. Laya, Member of Parliament Teodulo Natividad, Budget Minister Manuel Alba, MP Salvador Britanico, former acting Foreign Minister Pacifico Castro, MIA Manager Luis Tabuena, Isabela Gov. Faustino Dy, Information Minister Gregorio Cendana, Justice Minister Estelito Mendoza, Justice Buenaventura Guerrero, Assistant Press Secretary Amante Bigornia, MP Antonio Raquiza, Economic Planning Minister Vicente Valdepenas, and former Sen. Rodolfo Ganzon.

CHARM OFFENSIVE

Standing behind them are military men, including General Ver, Rear Admiral Ochoco, Felix Brawner, Carlos Martel, Juanito Veridiano, Hamilton Dimaya, Eustaquio Purugganan, Telesforo Tayko, Serapio Martillano, Pompeyo Vasquez, Victorino Azada, Arsenio Silva, Evaristo Sanches, Emerson Tangan, and Navy Capt. Danilo Lazo.

Marcos joins his men at the table and then appears again on television and presents two more arrested officers—Lt. Col. Jake Malajacan and Maj. Ricardo Brillantes who both read statements. Marcos says there are other officers arrested and are being interrogated, scoffs at Enrile and Ramos' demand for him to resign. He brushes aside claims 300,000 to 400,000 people are gathering at Edsa, some carrying images of the Virgin Mary.

1:30 p.m.

Troops led by Metropolitan Police chief Alfredo Lim ignores orders to disperse crowd.

2:20 p.m.

Aquino arrives in Manila and proceeds to her sister's house in Wack Wack, Mandaluyong.

Enrile and Ramos decide to consolidate forces at Crame. Linking arms, the people at Edsa create a protective wall for Enrile and RAM troops as they cross over from Aguinaldo.

2:47 p.m.

Car with tinted windows bearing Aquino cruises alongside loyalist column of seven tanks and two Marine battalions led by Tadiar moving on Edsa.

3 p.m.

People at corner of Ortigas and Edsa form human barricades to block path of oncoming tanks. Tense stand-off begins.

4 p.m.

Over phone, Marcos offers Enrile absolute pardon, rejects Enrile's demand that tanks be stopped.

6:30 p.m.

Radio Veritas signs off after emergency transmitter bogs down.

In a news conference, Enrile announces his men's rejection of Marcos' offer of pardon. Ramos talks about "New Armed Forces."

7 p.m.

Papal Nuncio Bruno Torpigliani hands Marcos a letter from Pope John Paul II asking for peaceful resolution of crisis. White House issues a statement questioning "credibility and legitimacy" of Marcos government.

11:30 p.m.

June Keithley, who has been broadcasting at Radio Veritas since start of rebellion, moves to dzRJ facilities using Veritas' frequency of 840 to keep location a secret. Col. Ruben Ciron, one of Enrile's men, facilitates transfer of frequency.

Crowd thins as tanks retreat, but human barricades remain intact.

Officials who withdraw support from Marcos: Consul to Honolulu Raul Rabe, Lt. Noel Buan, Brigadier Generals Tomas Manlongat, Renato de Villa, Dionisio Tan-Gatue, Carlos Aguilar, Benjamin Ignacio and Rodrigo Gutan, police superintendents Narciso Cabrera, Ruben Escarcha, Alfredo Yson

THE PEOPLE

Along came street kids singing 'Bayan Ko'

By Angus L. Campbell

ON THE MONDAY OF EDSA I, AFTER MINGling with what seemed like a happy confident crowd on Edsa and throwing over the Camp Crame fence some loaves of bread to cheerful soldiers, as my small contribution to their welfare, I walked back to Cubao.

There, I met a group of some 30 waifs and street children marching in formation up Edsa toward Crame. They might not have known much about the great political issues at hand, but they were smiling and waving as though confident that all would be well again.

They were the sort of 10- to 15-year-old boys and girls who offered sampaguitas, watched your car, boarded buses selling peanuts.

But they hit me in the heart, for they were all singing, as loud as they could, that loveliest of national songs that the military had tried to suppress because it had become almost an alternative national anthem—Bayan Ko.

They brought tears to my eyes.

'My eyes filled with tears'

By Ching de las Alas-Montinola

AFTER THREE DAYS HOLDING THE FORT AS chief liaison officer in the media bureau of the Corazon Aquino campaign, I decided I should not be left out of the action and went to Edsa I.

As I made my way through the countless brave souls, I could not believe my eyes. My heart was in my throat, tears filled my eyes. It was unbelievable. I was so touched and so proud to be a Filipino.

How else could there have been an occasion to show so much love and concern for people and country!

With my ID, I was able to go inside Camp Crame. I can never forget the faces of the soldiers, especially that of Ramos and Enrile, the expressions of anxiety and fatigue but full of determination, bravery and hope.

I was able to talk to Ramos. He was worried about his family. He assured me that people in the camp were fine and not to worry about them, just to take care of the soldiers outside. I gave him the number to our communications office and offered whatever help I could give.

Next day, Ramos called to inform me that Marcos had left with the help of the Americans and that they were holding out well. In the afternoon, Ramos was frantically calling me back: "Ching, call back the people, Marcos is still at the Palace!"

The rest is history! Edsa I had ended, but the story still goes on and on. There are so many anecdotes to tell, so many experiences to share—heroic events that will always be part of our lives. For being part of this history, I stand proud.

Not by bread alone

By Nenita S. Dayrit

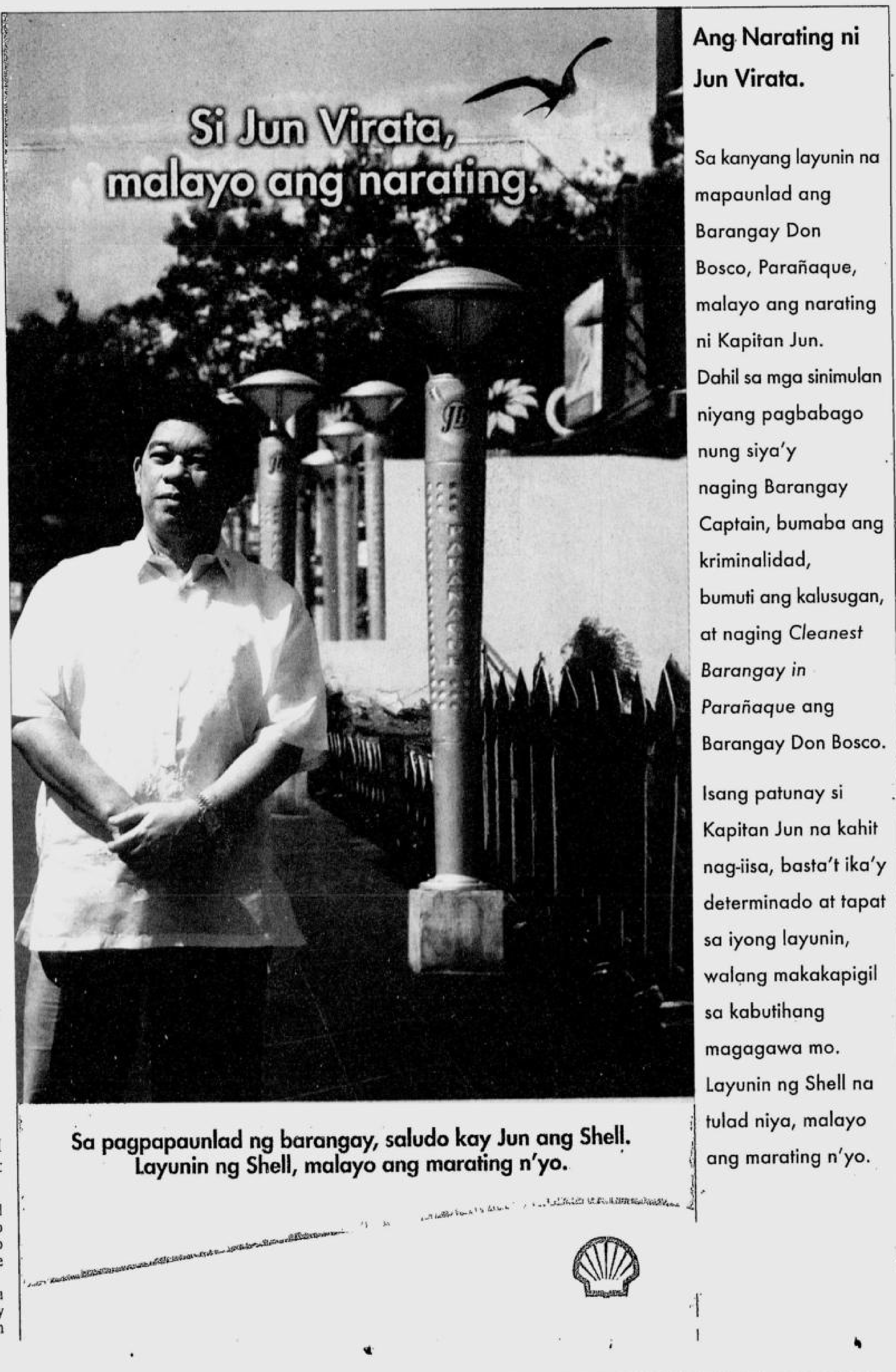
IT OCCURRED TO ME THAT I HAD ONLY ENOUGH money for my small bakery's day-to-day output. It was also my fifth son's birthday that Feb. 25, 1986.

But when the Ecumenical Bible Group in Angeles City came to me to ask for help for its members who were marching to Edsa, I cleared my shelves and gave all the bread that we had baked for the day.

I did not even think about what we would have for tomorrow.

At that time, I was a mother of seven children. We were in need of some extra income. But I also wanted to go with the group to Edsa, except that I was then five months pregnant.

Giving them what I had was a chance to show what I really wanted to do—a small deed in the eyes of God!



Ang Narating ni Jun Virata.

Sa kanyang layunin na mapaunlad ang Barangay Don Bosco, Parañaque, malayo ang narating ni Kapitan Jun. Dahil sa mga sinimulan niyang pagbabago nung siya'y naging Barangay Captain, bumaba ang kriminalidad, bumuti ang kalusugan, at naging *Cleanest Barangay in Parañaque* ang Barangay Don Bosco.

Isang patunay si Kapitan Jun na kahit nag-iisa, basta't ika'y determinado at tapat sa iyong layunin, walang makakapigil sa kabutihang magagawa mo. Layunin ng Shell na tulad niya, malayo ang marating n'yo.

Sa pagpapaunlad ng barangay, saludo kay Jun ang Shell.
Layunin ng Shell, malayo ang marating n'yo.

THE PEOPLE

Corporate showdown at PAL

By Ismael G. Khan Jr.
(The writer is now chief of the Supreme Court public information office)

TWO DAYS BEFORE THE Marcoses were spirited out of Malacañang by US helicopters, I was with three senior executives of the Philippine Airlines in the rebel command center.

The meeting in Camp Crame was secretly arranged by retired Gen. Angel Okol of the Philippine Air Force.

The mission was to put PAL planes and personnel at the disposal of Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and Gen. Fidel Ramos and beyond the reach of Marcos and his associates in the national flag carrier with its country-wide network of airports and aviation fuel depots.

In fact, PAL had already clandestinely fueled up rebel-commandeered aircraft, including helicopters and jet fighters, as well as a C-130 transport plane, in its MIA (Manila International Airport) tank farm.

As PAL's vice president for human resources, I was tasked by the late Martin Bonoan, executive vice president, and the late Capt. Jaime Manzano, vice president for flight operations, to secure the support of the airline's 12,000 employees in the decision of our break-away management group to support the people power forces massing at Edsa.

I hastily conferred with the officers of Alpap, representing approximately 600 pilots, Palea—the union of 8,000 plus ground personnel, and Fasap's leaders who spoke for PAL's more than 2,000 flight attendants.

I am pleased to say that there was nary a dissent from PAL's powerful labor unions whose members later contributed a few thousands to the numbers at Edsa.

Faced with a fait accompli that same morning when confronted by a grimly determined break-away management group consisting of its most senior company officials, PAL's board of directors did not even try to abort this corporate rebellion within its own ranks and, instead, resigned from their sinecures later in the day.

It was after this confrontation that our small group comprising Leslie Espino, SVP for marketing and son of former AFP Chief of Staff Romeo Espino, Dong Puno, vice president for legal, and Iking Santos, vice president for public affairs, was delegated to confer with General Ramos and Minister Enrile to inform them that PAL was entirely committed to their cause.

It is not generally known, but the airline's president and CEO—Roman Cruz Jr.—tacitly lent his encouragement to our secretive plotting by not lifting a finger even when he knew that a cabal of senior corporate officers was actively supporting the People Power Revolution.

Project Editor
Fernando del Mundo
Editors
Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc
Nilo Paurom
Leah Makabenta
Rosario Garcellano
Ruben Alabastro
Miguel Suarez
Designers
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Marlone Rubio
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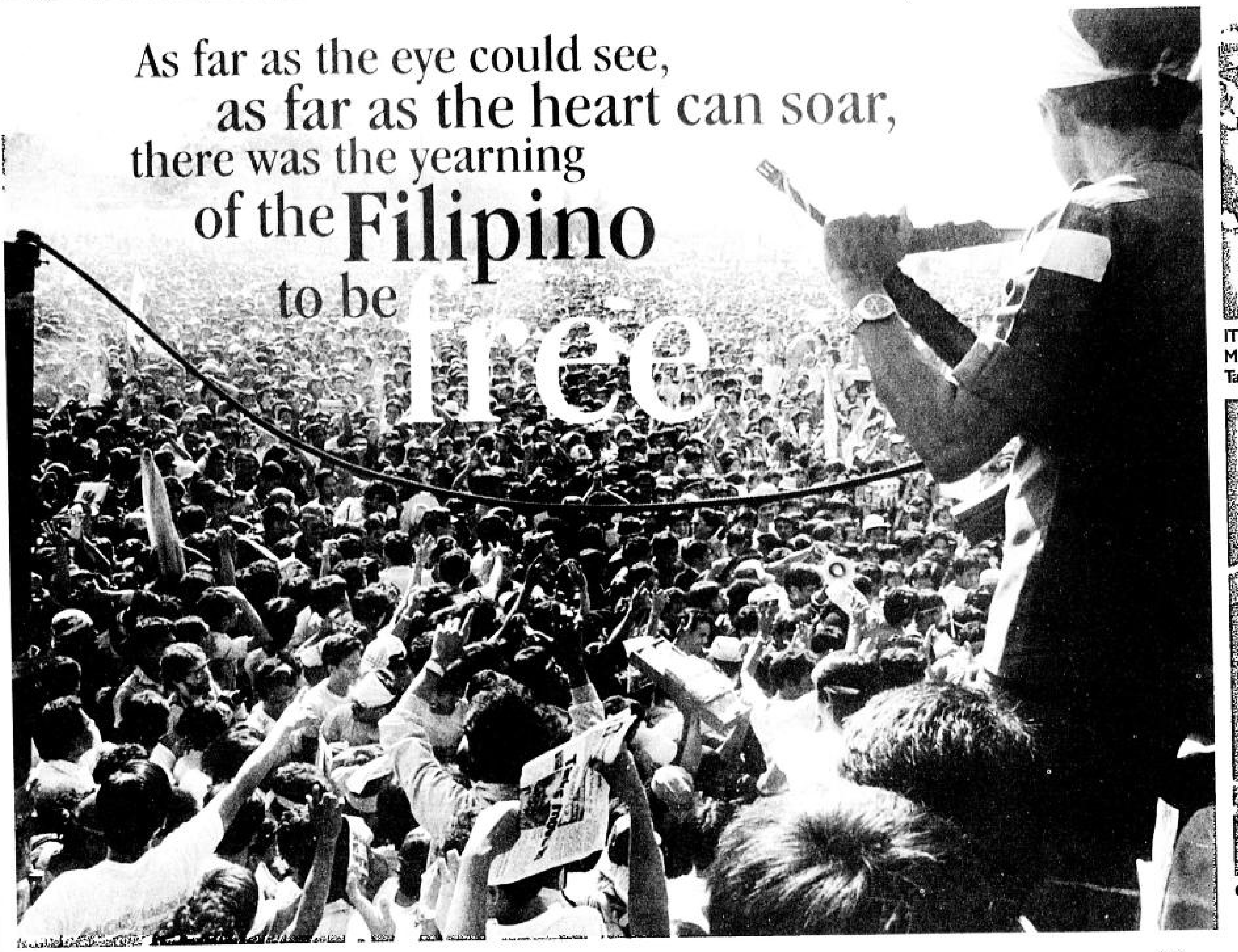
As far as the eye could see,
as far as the heart can soar,
there was the yearning
of the Filipino
to be
free

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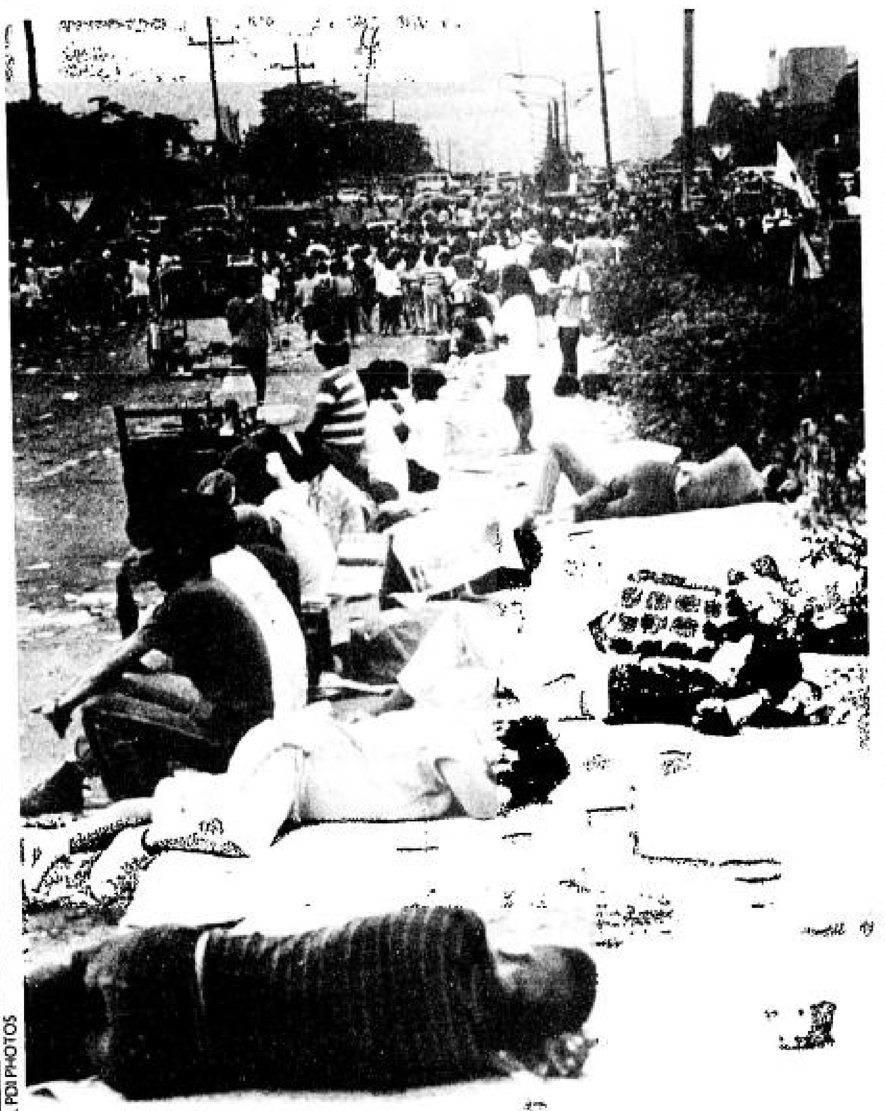
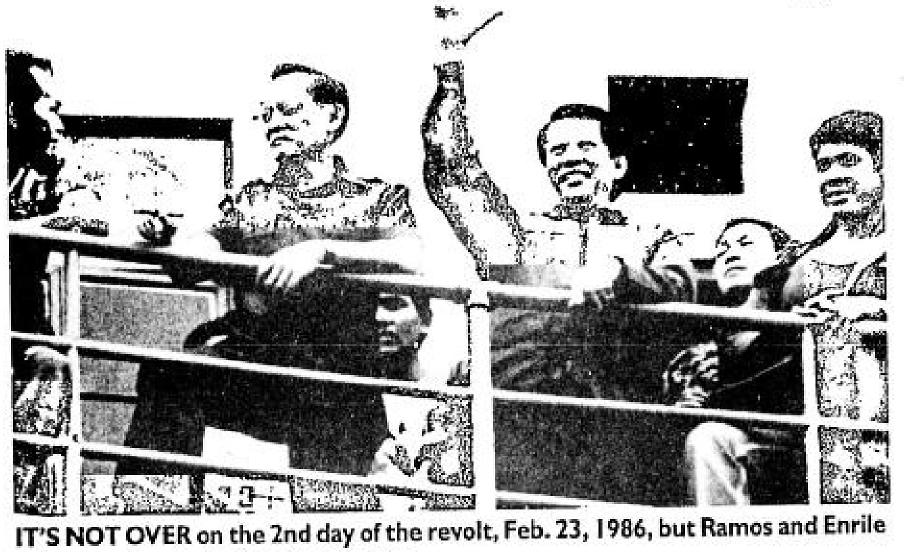
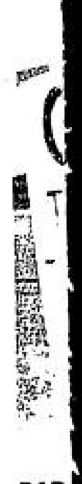


ALL PDI PHOTOS

THEY SLEPT right there in the street to keep the soldiers of the so-called new AFP safe.



IT'S NOT OVER on the 2nd day of the revolt, Feb. 23, 1986, but Ramos and Enrile put on a win-win photo-op posturing.



RAD
imm
Keith

CROSSING THE RUBICON as it were from Aguinaldo to Crame.

FLOWER POWE

THE PALACE

RP diplomats join Cory; foreign ministry's leaders were fir

From page A1

phoned Josue Villa, the assistant minister for American Affairs, to inquire about what was happening.

Josue, who was also listening to Radio Veritas, said: "I don't know. Maybe this is what is called people power."

I also called Assistant Minister Rafael A. Gonzales, the Chief of Protocol who ranked second only to Acting Foreign Minister Pacifico "Pex" Castro in the MFA pecking order. Ralph said he did not know any more than I did.

Monday, Feb. 24

Early that morning, Gonzales called a meeting of the Assistant Ministers. He told us that Castro was on his way to the airport on a mission to Japan with Ambassador Carlos J. Valdes to assure the Japanese government that President Ferdinand Marcos was firmly in control of the country and to request continued assistance from the Japanese.

Defections

I had learned over the radio that our Consul General in Honolulu, Raul Ch. Rabe, had denounced the dictatorship and announced support for Mrs. Corazon C. Aquino.

We learned about the measures that Castro immediately took on Rabe's defection. He withdrew Rabe's consular commission and ordered Consul General Antonio Villamor to proceed from Washington D.C. and take over the Consulate General in Honolulu. He also asked the banks and other suppliers not to honor Rabe's signature.

We also learned that another colleague, Consul Leovigildo Anolin, the Acting Consul General in Los Angeles, had followed Rabe's lead and switched allegiance to Mrs. Aquino. The assistant ministers were in the midst of discussions on what to do about Anolin when Castro made an unexpected appearance. Everyone was rendered speechless by his intimidating presence.

Castro said that during his absences he was entrusting the ministry to the assistant ministers under the leadership of Gonzales.

He also said that President Marcos was in firm control. He ticked on his fingers the number of Armed Forces generals, including their units and positions, who had just pledged allegiance to Marcos. He left soon afterward.

We resumed the discussion of the Anolin case. There was talk that the precedent of Castro's action on Honolulu should be followed in the case of Los Angeles, and that Consul Eufronia Recaido in Seattle be sent to take over the Consulate General in Los Angeles.

However, Vicente G. Reyes, the assistant minister for administration, pointed out that the many Filipinos requiring passports, visas, legal assistance and other services would be affected by such an action. Reyes suggested that we just ignore Anolin and wait for events in Manila to develop to the final conclusion that would inexorably come. This view prevailed, supported by most of the asmins, including me.

Whoever would gain control of the country would need the services of the ministry. The AsMins therefore also agreed to preserve as much as possible the unity of the ministry and of the Foreign Service.

It was really chaotic in the ministry offices that Monday. The few people who reported for work were passing around the latest news/rumors that they had heard.

At home, I had a hard time restraining my wife Elizabeth from joining the crowds around Camp Crame. She wanted "to participate in influencing the course of history."

Family pro-Cory

We are a family of six siblings, three brothers and three sisters. My wife, with all my in-laws and my sisters, was vocally pro-Cory, as were all my nephews and nieces.

Tuesday, Feb. 25

After a sleepless night, I finally came to a decision, about which I could not even tell my wife. I would try to persuade the asmins to go to the Cory camp. As it turned out, they had come to the same decision.

This was the day when both Mrs. Aquino and Mr. Marcos were scheduled to take their oaths as President of the Philippines. We could no longer postpone a decision on whom to support.

I was at the office before 8 a.m. I researched on the precedence of the assistant ministers, then typed a draft statement consisting of one sentence: "The assistant ministers and other Heads of Offices have requested Assistant Minister Rafael A. Gonzales to seek instructions from President Corazon C. Aquino, for the guidance of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs," followed by the names—with space provided for their signatures—of all the assistant ministers.

Close to Kokoy

I showed Ralph the draft statement. He was very close to Gov. Benjamin "Kokoy" Romualdez and the First Family, having always accompanied them on their frequent foreign trips. I was surprised when Gonzales said "Excellent" and asked his secretary to make a clean draft for presentation to the AsMins.

It was then that asMin Reyes barged into Gonzales' office, brandishing another statement drafted by New York Consul General Ernesto Pineda who was on leave in Manila. Ernie joined Ralph, Vic and I soon afterward.

Ernie's statement was a treatise on martial law, the Constitution, the integrity of the past presidential election, allegations of human rights vio-

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puzzlement:
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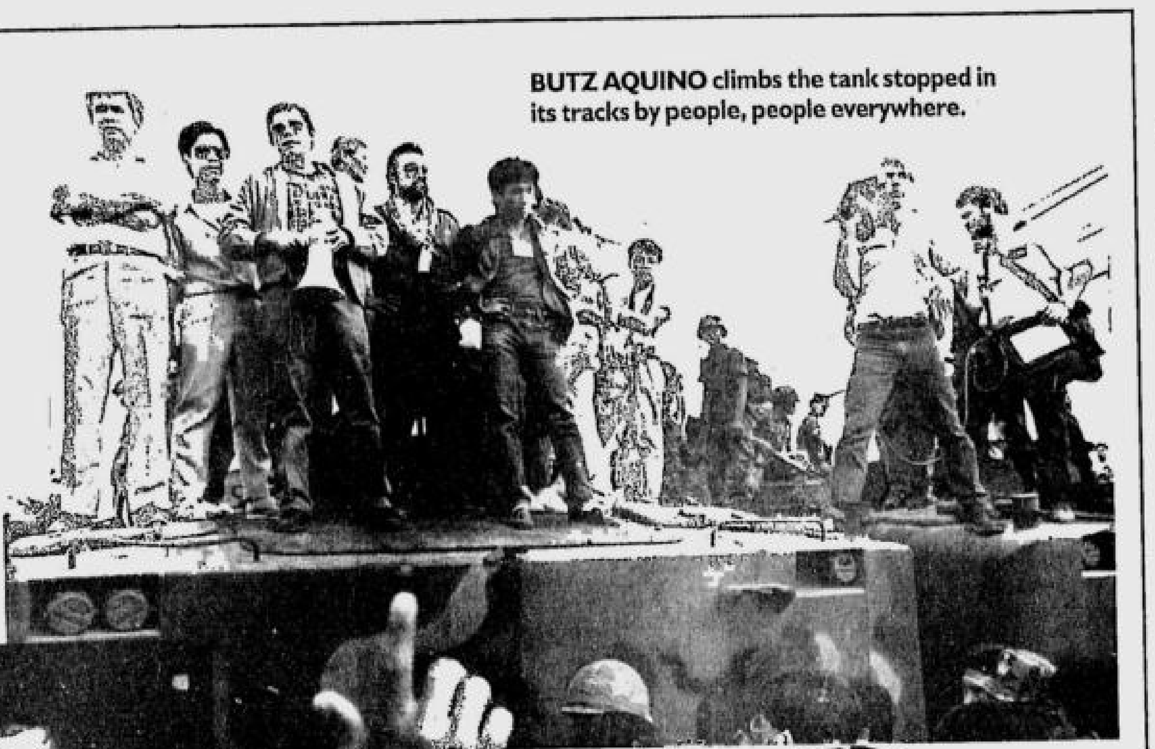

BUTZ AQUINO climbs the tank stopped in its tracks by people, people everywhere.

Y IN CEBU, in the evening of Feb. 22,
, holds press conference.

THE FLOCK listens to the voice of Cardinal Sin.

CLOSED
TRANSMITTERS
TALLY WRECKED
O Veritas transmitter in Bulacan is
bilized, limiting its reach to Luzon. But June
ley moves to dzRJ, kept top secret then.

HUMAN BARRICADE secures the gate of Camp Crame on the first day.

charms fully armed troops.

ENRILE
WE AP RAMOS FOR YOU
TOSHIBA
CORY
SAINTS GALORE come marching in.

OLDER, BUT ARE THEY ANY WISER? The RAM boys hold their first reunion in 20 years. Seated are from left, Commodore Rex Robles (ret.), ex-Sen. Gringo Honasan and Gen. Jose Almonte (ret.).

People Power remains strongest political moral force, says Gringo

By Fe Zamora

TWENTY YEARS AFTER HE and a cabal of disaffected officers plotted to capture Malacañang, former Sen. Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan said yesterday that people power remained the "strongest political and moral force" available to the government.

"People power is not obsolete. People power is very much alive. People power like the truth, is unstoppable," said the former Army colonel and leader of the original RAM (Reform AFP Movement).

"People power is a tool, is a weapon that can be harnessed for national unity, development and economic prosperity," he said.

Honasan's remarks came after some sectors in government and in the Roman Catholic Church voiced skepticism about the need for another People Power uprising to effect political change.

Besides being involved in the 1986 plot against Marcos, Honasan also led failed coup attempts in 1987 and 1989.

Then a colonel assigned as chief of security at the Department of National Defense, Honasan had planned to lead an assault team on Malacañang to capture the late President Ferdinand Marcos at dawn of Feb. 23, 1986.

A bigger group, to be led by Lt. Col. Eduardo Kapunan and Lt. Col. Rodolfo Aguinaldo, would attack the Palace grounds. Other RAM members were assigned to secure key units in the Air Force, Army and Navy.

The plot was uncovered by Marcos a day before it was to be launched, forcing Honasan and the RAM to take a defensive last stand in Camp Aguinaldo.

Paunches and thinning hair

Sporting paunches and receding hairlines, about a dozen RAMboys gathered yesterday at the Club Filipino to commemorate the four-day Edsa 1986 People Power Revolution and reminisce on what they did 20 years ago.

"We didn't have a leader. Whoever talked to the media was the leader," retired Col. Hernani Figueroa, who acted as RAM spokesperson, propagandist and psywar expert, said with a laugh.

The original RAMboys have prepared a book that would "tell their story." But the launching, initially set for yesterday, has been reset for August.

"Many of us could not anymore recall what we did. Age is catching up on us," retired police genral Vic Batac, also said.

Enrile, Ramos not invited

Noticeably absent from the gathering were former President Fidel V. Ramos and former Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile, whose breakaway from Marcos and call for public support triggered the popular uprising on Feb. 22, 1986.

Honasan said Ramos and Enrile were not invited because Edsa '86 "was not about personalities."

He also stressed that it was a reunion mainly of the "original RAM members" who had plotted to oust Marcos.

But there were more media than "Ramboys" at the reunion.

Captive audience

Retired Commodore Rex Robles, as usual, dominated the conversations with his wit and humor. Robles' captive audience included Honasan, Batac, retired Navy Capt. Felix Turringan and retired Col. Rafael Galvez.

Keeping to themselves in another table were retired Maj Gen. Rey Rivera and retired colonels Figueroa, Tito Legaspi, Vic Erfe, Mel Acosta, Rollie Garcia and Bobby Santos.

Noticeably absent were the officers who were arrested by Marcos and whom he presented on TV as the "coup plotters" to try to defuse the rebellion.

Batac said his classmate, retired Brig. Gen. Jake Malajacan, had a previous commitment and that Maj Gen. Ricardo Brillantes and Col. Ricardo Morales were excused because they were still in the active service.

Brig. Gen. Saulito Aromin passed away some years ago.

Tribute to the fallen

A video presentation paid tribute to the RAM's "fallen comrades," namely, Aguinaldo, Maj. Francisco Baula, Capt. Fermin Cuison, Col. Tirso Gador, Col. Ceferino Sarmenta, Capt. Rolando Cal and Brig. Gen. Eugenio Ocampo.

Originally called R.E.F.O.R.M. the Armed Forces Movement, the RAM group was a loose organization of graduates from the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) who met at Camp Crame after office hours for beer and jokes.

REFORM stood for Restore Ehtics, Fair-Mindedness, Order, Righteousness and Morale.

The group made itself public by unfurling a streamer with the words "We Belong" during the PMA alumni parade in February, 1985. Honasan said the group's primary aim was "reforms" in the AFP.

Peace pact

At that time, the AFP was suffering from a credibility crisis due to suspicions that it was behind the killing of opposition leader Benigno Aquino on Aug. 21, 1983.

Batac said the streamer was a response to a statement from Malacañang that "reform minded" officers were "cowards hiding behind the cloak of anonymity."

Renamed Rebolusyonaryong Alyansang Makabansa (RAM), the group would also be involved in the 1987 and the 1989 coup attempts, two of the most serious attempts to unseat then President Cory Aquino.

In 1995, the RAM, together with the Young Officers Union and the Soldiers of the Filipino People, signed a peace agreement with the Ramos administration, formally ending its clandestine maneuverings against the government. The pact also granted amnesty to the members of the RAM-SFP-YOU.

---

st to accept Cory

, the career foreign service, etc.
d with a paragraph that said
FA was siding with President
.

h was fascinated by Ernie's draft.
gued: "Let us just side with Cory,
t giving offense to anybody and
needless debates."

h then made a pseu-
omonic decision: "Let us adopt
The short statement is to be
by the AsMins and Ernie as rep-
ative of the Foreign Service,
he long one will be open for our
res and that of all willing MFA
and employees."

n the employees heard that a
ry statement was open for signa-
ey all flocked to the Office of Pro-
sign. Because of transportation
ties, many including some As-
vere not able to report for work. I
them by phone and signed for
ho gave me authority.

orio T. Cagampan, the Assistant
r for American Affairs, said: "You
Johnny, I was among those who
y argued strongly for measures
Consul Anolin." I said: "That was
ast. This is today." He signed the statement.

Another said: "I have been very close to Governor Romualdez. Please understand that I would feel very uncomfortable if I were to abandon him now." I respected his decision.

But an overwhelming majority of the AsMins signed or gave others authority to sign for them.

In the meantime, George Gamboa from the Press Office had gotten hold of the AsMins' statement. He at once phoned his friend, TV announcer Tina Monzon-Palma. Thus it was that immediately after broadcasting the oath-taking of President Aquino, Palma proceeded to read the statement (my version), followed by the names of all the AsMins, including those who had not yet signed and the one who had refused to sign, and their positions.

As far as I know, the MFA was the only department whose leadership formally accepted the authority of President Aquino. It was this statement that the Americans used when they told President Marcos to leave because "your ministries are deserting you one after the other."

(To be concluded)

THE MILITARY

When mistahs embrace

From page A1

The next day, there were rumblings about the resignation of Minister Enrile and General Ramos.

"What's this you've been doing?" Ramos asked when I presented myself at Camp Crame the following day. "Sir, I'm sorry I moved ahead of you," I replied. He laughed and welcomed me aboard.

After a few hours in the camp, I joined the people outside the gates and spent the night on Santolan. It was there I joined Col. Mariano Santiago, who was rounding up men on a mission to take Channel 4.

Along the way, I joined a group that went to Channel 7 to see if the rebels would be given air time.

Rebuffed, we went back to Channel 4, where a fire fight was already under way between a PC Task Force led by Col. Alfredo Viduya and soldiers inside the compound. I positioned myself on the left side of the building and began firing.

At the height of the exchange, a group of armed policemen arrived in the area. They were led by Gen. Alfredo Lim who wanted to know what was going on. When I told him we had been instructed by General Ramos to take over the station, he replied, "Can't you just talk it over?" and left.

When I returned to my position, the firing was over. Channel 4 had been captured.

It was a great time to be there as lots of people started milling around the station and giving us food and drink.

PMA loyalty song

Later, Colonel Santiago brought all the PMAers into the building, saying he wanted us to sing the PMA Loyalty Song on TV. I don't know how we did it or how many we were but that was the second time I was on TV within a week.

I don't know if it was that same day or the next when I met Abby Tan, a Singaporean reporter, in the corridor. She was asking about a loyalist counter-attack on Channel 4. Just then, Colonel Santiago came and asked me to go with him to talk to some soldiers who he said were about to attack.

Set for attack

The soldiers were already positioned on the street beside the complex. There was no People Power around to protect us. We asked the soldiers who their commanding officer was and they pointed him out. As the CO approached, I immediately recognized him as a classmate in PMA—now Brig. Gen. Delfin Bangit, chief of the Presidential Guards. We embraced each other.

All this was videotaped. The embrace has been shown over and over on TV every time Edsa I is remembered.

I told my classmate that we were the people he was about to attack. After we parted and I started to walk back toward the station, I saw that they had also started withdrawing.

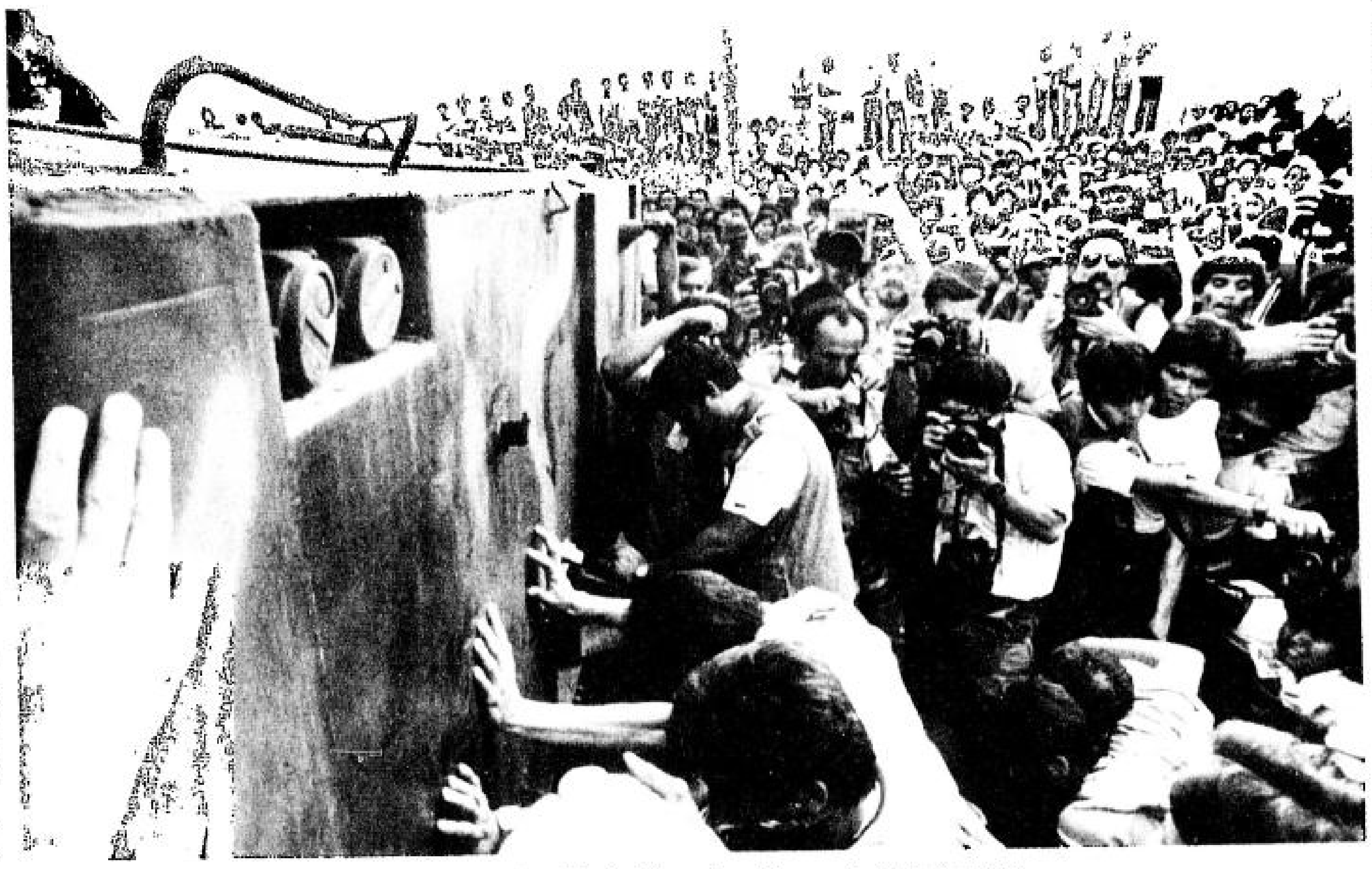
To this day I am thankful that it was a classmate who was on the verge of attacking Channel 4. It is likely that a battle was avoided because of that relationship.

A few months later I met Secretary Enrile in a hallway at the Defense Department. He recognized me and said, "*Naku.* Malacañang was so mad," he said, referring to news of my resignation. I laughed. Maybe, just maybe, I did have a hand in igniting the whole thing. After all, even if I did not know of their plans beforehand, I was identified as a member of Enrile's security.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

THE PEOPLE

'Twas like Good Friday before the traffic mess


ONLY IN THE PHILIPPINES: Humans stop tanks with their bare hands to regain their freedom.

From page A1

straight to the Dasmariñas, Makati, home of Aquino's sister-in-law, Tingting Cojuangco.

Tingting

There, he picked up Enrile's frantic phone call to Cojuangco, requesting for help to summon people to protect the rebels at Camps Aguinaldo and Crame.

There were about a dozen people in the Cojuangco residence—mostly political leaders from Mindanao.

Cojuangco decided to proceed to Camp Aguinaldo and the group crammed into two cars. It was around 2 p.m.

While driving along Edsa, the group saw a convoy of tanks, armored personnel carriers and trucks filled with combat-ready Marines, bandoleers dangling from their shoulders.

They flashed the L-sign for Laban—fight, Aquino's campaign cry—and engaged the soldiers in a heckling contest for a while before speeding ahead when the possibility of an assault on the rebels dawned on them.

But upon reaching the Edsa-Ortigas crossing, Cojuangco stopped and the group got out of their cars.

Edsa was deserted

"The place was deserted. It was like Good Friday," Borja told the INQUIRER.

The crowds that Cardinal Jaime L. Sin had summoned in radio broadcasts the night before had gone home. Sin was again airing pleas on Church-run Radio Veritas for people to go back to Edsa.

But on that afternoon, there was hardly a soul at that Edsa-Ortigas junction.

"I heard Tingting scream 'Kapit-bisig! (Link arms),'" Borja said. And she and her friends formed a puny line in the middle of the highway. "It was a pathetic sight. There was nobody around. If there was, we were being ignored," he said.

But as the Marine convoy rumbled onward menacingly, Borja worked instinctively.

An experienced driver whose family once owned the largest trucking fleet in Mindanao, Borja hailed a bus.

"Hey, boy, give me your bus," he ordered one. "The driver jumped out," said Borja, who was then 42 years old.

He parked the bus right on Edsa. After this, he commandeered another bus and did the same thing.

"I did it eight times, for good measure. The last vehicle was a taxi. I am sure the drivers still around remember me. I grabbed the buses from them. I parked the vehicles and got the keys," he said. He then ordered the drivers to flatten the tires.

At first there were 'uziseros'

"Then I climbed on top of these buses and tried to see what was happening. The parked buses were causing a massive traffic jam as far as the eye could see," said Borja.

The stranded passengers gathered around their commandeered buses and soon came the "uziseros," a takeoff from the Israeli-made automatic submachinegun for kibitzers.

As traffic piled up in monumental chaos, the crowd grew from hundreds into the thousands, then the tens of thousands.

Stopping convoy

By the time the Marine column reached the junction, a multitude had gathered there, stopping the convoy in its tracks.

Headed by Marine Brig. Gen. Artemio Tadiar with orders to assault the rebels, the convoy veered to the right toward Pasig and was quickly engulfed in a sea of humanity.

Flag carrying, banner swinging cause-oriented groups marched in, along with priests and nuns carrying images of the Virgin Mary and praying the rosary. Women offered flowers to the soldiers, urging them not to fire their weapons.

"I was jumping for joy," said Borja as he surveyed from atop the buses the traffic mess he had created that started the People Power revolution.

'My wife, my 5-year-old Dindin and I were ready to die'

By Antonio B. Villafuerte

THE CARDINAL'S TONE was serious and firm: Go to Edsa. Protect our soldiers.

At around 4 a.m. on Feb. 23, my wife and I left our 5-year-old daughter Dindin with my mother- in-law, boarded our car and traversed the still empty highway.

I parked in front of the CLMC-CIGI building next to the gasoline station. I knew the place well, having worked in the vicinity. I knew where to hide or escape if there would be a fire fight.

There were 10 of us there, hauling decorative garden rocks from a landscaping shop next to the Soliven building, piling them up across the southbound lane.

As if from nowhere, several empty sacks were distributed. We started filling them up with moist garden soil or whatever we could scoop from the store.

In 15 minutes, several groups were also building their barricades. We started to organize.

The women and children would fill the sacks, the men would carry them and pile them up on the highway.

The atmosphere was light and friendly, but there was unspoken fear.

What if those Marcos-Ver troops shelled the two military camps? What if the Sikorskys strafed the highway with warning fire?

After a while, and almost simultaneously, my wife and I voiced a common fear: What if we both get killed here?

We both said, "Let's get Dindin!"

We went home, got our daughter and returned to the "battlefield."

At least, if our defenses at Edsa were bombed, the three of us would go together.

BUS RUNS TO COL, SAMAR LEY
TELEPHONE RESERVATIONS
LSO AVAILABLE CALL
VILLAFUERTES with Dindin (middle) feasting on victory. Dindin now works with PDI.

Stargazing on wondrous night

From page A1

tion. PUI required the confluence of the electoral struggle, the mass movement and a limited armed component. Hardly did we dream that the armed component would be in the form of a failed Army coup!

But definitely, the mass movement was there, coming in by the thousands. Of course Kasapi cadres were among the first to join Agapito (Butz) Aquino and his Atom group at Isetann department store in Cubao. So Super K was put up at the corner of Santolan as one of the frontlines of the people power crowd.

Several times during the four days, adrenalin was up as we prepared for an attack by Marcos loyalist military forces. We readied our water-soaked *tubao* (big kerchiefs) for the tear gas. There was disappointment mixed with relief when no attack came at that side. More action was happening at the Camp Aguinaldo and White Plains areas.

Empowered people with disabilities

But I was glad enough for the relative calm at our "encampment," especially because we were joined by a large group of persons with disabilities. The Munting Pamayanan ng may Kapansanan (MPK) under the leadership of Mike Catain, had been linked to Kasapi particularly because of organizing efforts of former Kasapi chair Rolando Montiel, then still in detention with other April 6 Liberation Movement leaders at Camp Bagong Diwa. These detainees were the people absent from Edsa I who helped make it happen!

The MPK was well organized and took care of the needs of its members, including the food distribution. They were ready to face the dangers and determined to take their place as Filipinos—millions now awakened as one organism to finally oust the dictator.

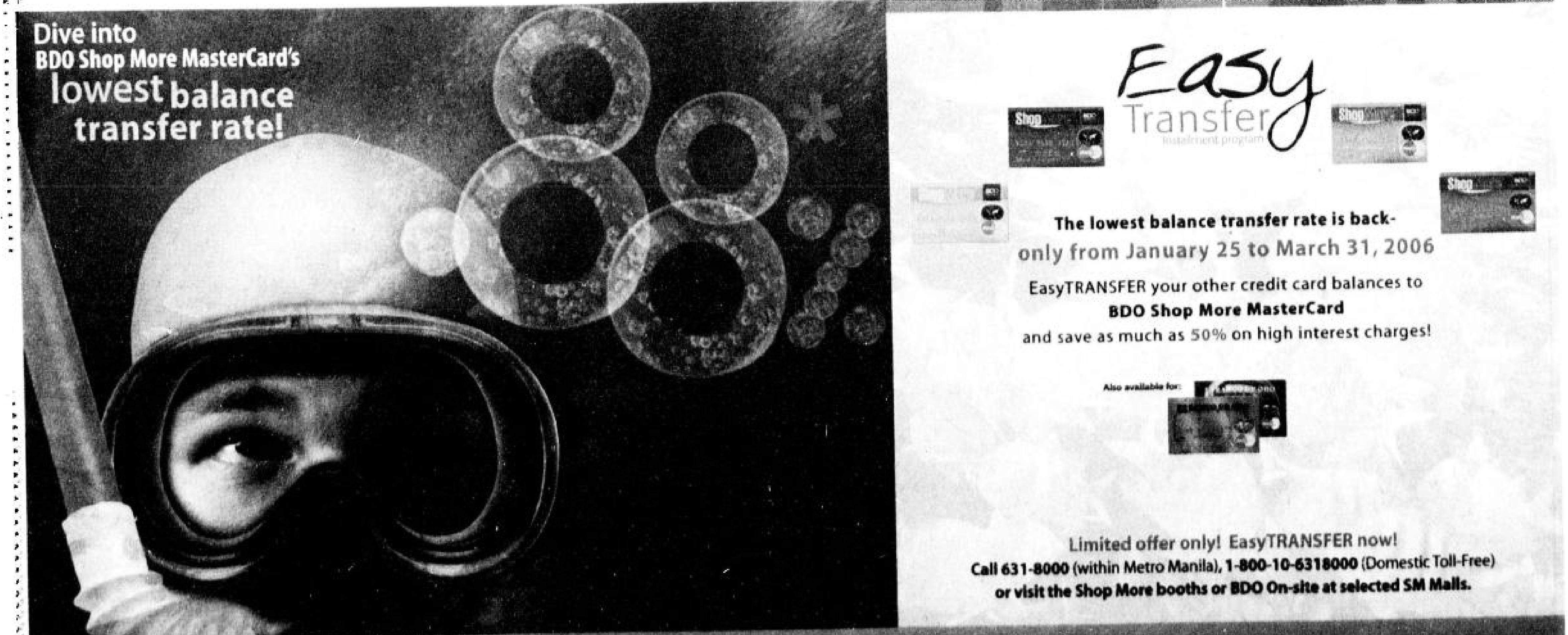
Night of freedom

At first it was a false alarm. Then it was—almost unbelievably—true: The Marcoses had left Malacañang, escaping by US-provided helicopter. I was still dazed as the people were hugging, cheering, crying with joy.

Some of the people started to move toward Malacañang. It was not a massive force, with the crowds staying more at Edsa in celebration. I felt pulled to go and witness the moment at the liberated Malacañang, even though I really didn't know the people I was moving with.

We were practically running most of the time—swiftly covering Ortigas, Ramon Magsaysay Avenue to J.P. Laurel. The Malacañang gates must have been closed by then. At any rate the group I was with didn't try to go in.

I was content to sleep on the sidewalk outside Malacañang. I arranged my *malong* into a pillow and gazed at the stars on that wondrous night.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MIKO Yee of the Manila Southwoods blasts out of the trap in hole 1 yesterday. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

'We have differences in opinions'

By Marc Anthony Reyes

PHILIPPINE OLYMPIC COMMITTEE (POC) president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco yesterday said his feud with POC chair Robert Aventajado was nothing but a difference of opinions.

"We have differences in opinions just like in any group," said Cojuangco. "This is not a dictatorship and we decide every issue democratically."

The two sat together for four hours during the executive meeting convened by the POC board which decided to ask First Gentleman Mike Arroyo to reconsider his decision not to raise funds for Philippine sports anymore.

"We have prepared a resolution to ask him (FG) to reconsider," said Cojuangco, noting the huge amount needed for the country's campaign in the Doha Asian Games. The POC expects to spend at least P110,000 per Asiad athlete inclusive of plane fare, accommodation and allowances .

The POC, added Cojuangco, is thinking of sending between 50 and 100 athletes, who will be identified not by their sport as initially announced by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Cojuangco refused to comment whether Aventajado was among the candidates as Asiad chief of mission as earlier reported.

When asked if he's interested in getting the job, the taekwondo chief replied "*bahala na si* Cong (It's all up to him)."

But POC secretary general Steve Hontiveros said his choice is the First Gentleman so he can continue to support the Asiad campaign.

Meanwhile, Aventajado resigned as basketball committee chair and was replaced by Ding Tanjuatco and swimming's Mark Joseph.

Cojuangco said they are still waiting for the draft of the constitution of the new basketball body from the stakeholders, although he didn't discount the possibility of bringing back the name of the Basketball Association of the Philippines.

"It's just a name, it's immaterial," said Cojuangco. "As long as there's new membership and constitution and by-laws which is acceptable by the Fiba memorandum of agreement."

S'woods 9 up over Del Monte

By Musong R. Castillo

DAVAO CITY—SOUTHWOODS broke out of the gates hard, its A-Team impressively kicking off into high gear its bid for a second straight Philippine Airlines Interclub regular men's title here yesterday.

The Carmona-based parbusters totaled 145 over the up-and-down Rancho Palos Verdes, getting 37 points each from the 1-under-par 71s of Anthony Fernando and Japanese teener Toru Nakajima to open up a nine-point lead over darkhorse Del Monte.

The second Japanese in the Southwoods lineup, 18-year-old Matsumura Michio, matched par for 36 points, and jungolf hotshot Tonlits Asistio contributed 35 to complete scoring for the defending champions.

Jett Plete paced 2004 winner Del Monte with a flawless 4-under 68 for 40 points and Boboy Jaraulla backed him up with a solid 37 despite a pick-up on No. 1. But skipper Yoyong Velez accounted for only 31 and Marty Ilagan counted with 28 points.

Sweep-seeking Canlubang struggled, doing no better than a 135 anchored on the two 35s of JR Tanpinco and Mario Labajo to trail by 10.

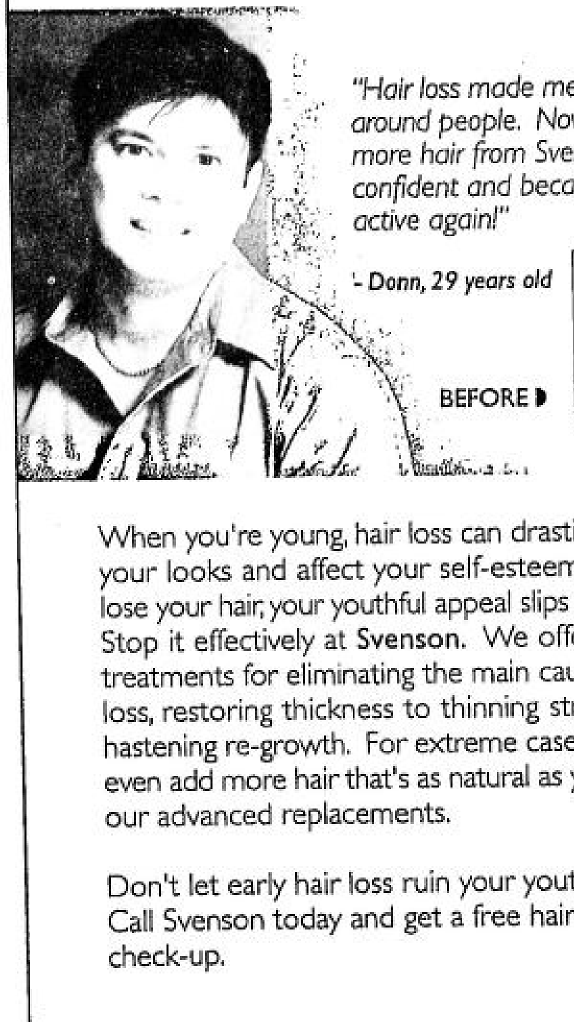
Joseph Labajo's 33 and the 32 of former RP Amateur champion Jun Bernis counted for the Sugar Barons, whose senior team, led by Tommy Manotoc, won the division for 55 years and older for the first time last Saturday in runaway style.

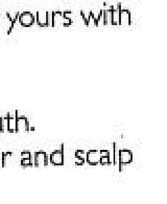
Wack Wack paced the Founders Division with its 116 tally at Apo.

Villamor held a shaky one-point lead in the Sportswriters Division over Manila Golf after a 105 also at Apo while Stanford pooled 98 points to lead Friendship division play.

Major sponsors of the tournament are Action Asia, Airbus, Boeing, GE Aviation, GMA7, Honda Cars, Davao, INQ7.net, Joey 92.3, Royal Caribbean International, Philippine Amusements and Gaming Corp., People Asia, Premier Wines and Spirits, Rudy Project, UMBN and Uraya Land Development Corp.

ABS-CBN International, Fortune Tobacco and Radio Mindanao Network are the corporate backers with 96.3 WRock, Asia Brewery, Century Park Hotel, Honda Megamotors, SM City Davao and Tanduay Rhum the other sponsors.





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- Donn, 29 years old

BEFORE ▶

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Bulldogs nip Cardinals in NCR showdown

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY EDGED Mapua Institute of Technology, 68-67, to emerge as the top qualifier for the National Capital Region (NCR) college men division in the 60th National Students Basketball Championships to be hosted by the Bicol Region from Feb. 27 to March 5 in Legazpi City.

Both the NU Bulldogs and the Mapua Cardinals are already assured of slots to the National Finals, together with defending champion University of Perpetual Help Rizal.

Former RP Youth mainstay Jonathan Fernandez scattered 29 points to power the Bulldogs to victory in this annual tournament organized by the Basketball Association of the Philippines (BAP) and supported by Burlington Socks, Air 21 Express, Summit Mineral Water and Healthy Options. The National Finals will be hosted by Gov. Fernando Gonzalez of Albay province and Legazpi City Mayor Noel Rosal.

Edwin Asoro and Cyrus Malagueño added 10 points apiece for NU.

Sean Co paced Mapua with 17 points, followed by Gilbert Migrazo with 10.

Polytechnic University of the Philippines clinched third place in the NCR eliminations.

Also making it to the National Finals are college women's qualifiers Philippine College of Criminology (PCCR), Philippine Maritime Institute (PMI) and WNCAA champion AMA Computer University. San Sebastian College and St. Clare College of Caloocan City qualified in the high school division.

In the NCR women's final, PCCR nipped PMI, 76-71, behind the heroics of Wendelyn Alvarez, Katrina Garcia and Grace Quemada.

The high school division National Finals will be held in Daet City, Camarines Norte, and hosted by Gov. Jesus Typoco in coordination with BAP regional director Julian Lavadia and BAP provincial commissioner Dr. Abundio "Bong" Palencia. High School participants will be billeted at Hotel Venezia and Avenrose Suites in Daet City.

Graham C. Lim, the BAP secretary general, announced the other qualifiers for the college men's division are University of Luzon of Pangasinan Province, Tuguegarao College of Region II, Angeles University Foundation of Region III, San Pedro College of Business Administration of Region IV, West Negros College of Region VI, Bohol Institute of Technology and San Carlos University of Region VII, Eastern Visayas State University of Region VIII, Southern Technical Institute of Cagayan de Oro and University of Mindanao of Region XI, and Northeastern Mindanao College of Caraga Region.

PARTICIPANTS in the novice category suffer a spill.

Kiwi rules Supercross

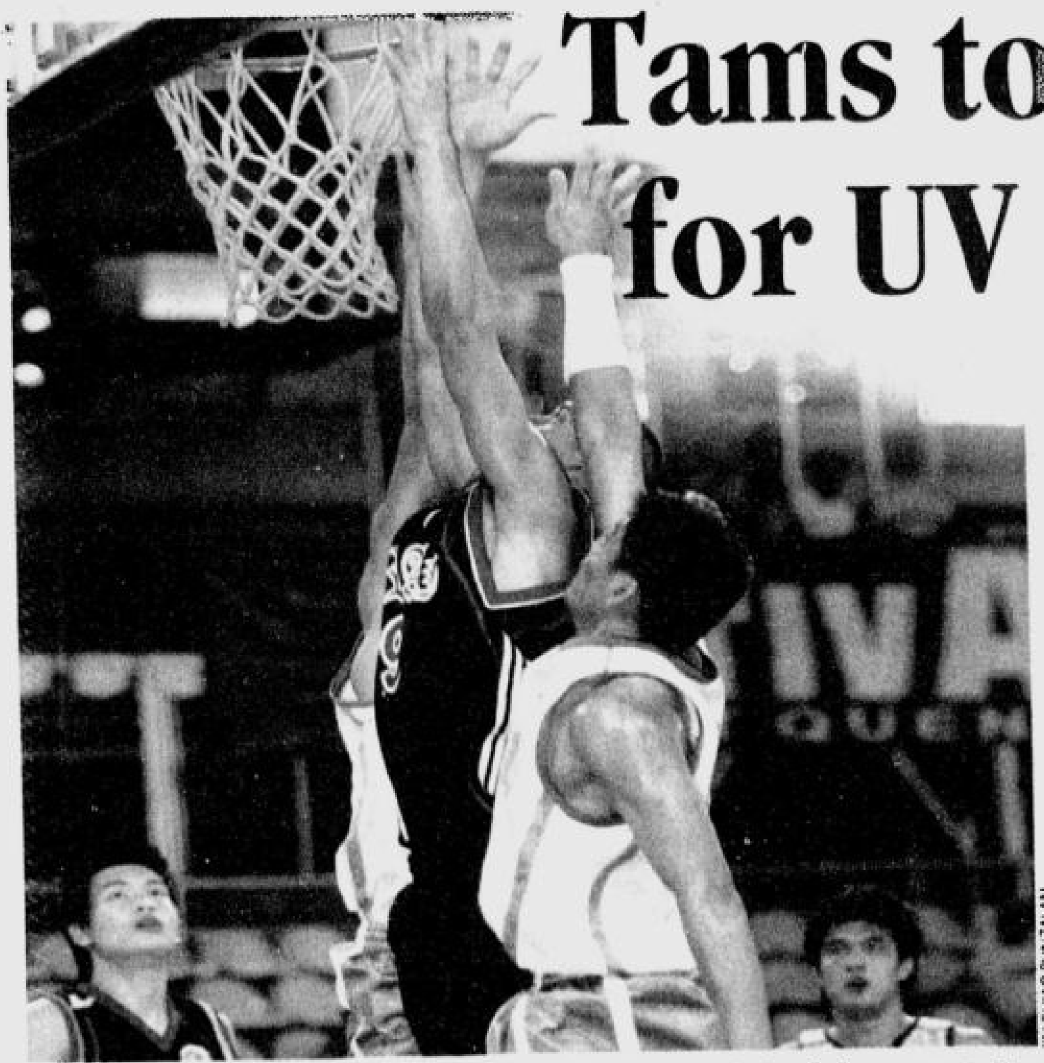
TALISAY CITY—NEW ZEALANDER James Robinson stole the show from Filipino ace Glenn Aguilar on Sunday, clinching the professionals open crown in the first round of the Camel Supercross International Championship Series at the Talisay Stadium here.

Aguilar, the 2004 Asian supercross champion, consoled himself by topping the professionals 125 cc division earlier at the expense of countryman Filipino Jovie Saulog and Robinson, who placed second and third.

After going neck-and-neck in the first three laps, Robinson, a former international supercross titlist, pulled away from Aguilar after the Filipino fell in the final turn of the fourth lap.

Aguilar's mishap left him 500 meters behind the Kiwi with 11 laps to go and the best he could do was narrow the gap to 200 meters by the end of the race to finish as first runner-up. Saulog placed third in the international event that will stage its second round at the Santa Barbara Race Track in Iloilo City on March 5. *Christian Irl C. Tan*

Tams too tough for UV Lancers



JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

LETRAN'S Hafer Mondragon beats two PCU Dolphins for a shot during their game yesterday.

By Marc Anthony Reyes

EVEN WITHOUT ITS STARS, FAR EASTERN University proved too tough for University of Visayas, scoring an 81-71 victory and securing the top spot in their division yesterday in the National Students Basketball Championships at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

Letran College also bared its teeth, ripping Philippine Christian University, 75-64.

The Tamaraws showed but a shadow of their UAAP championship form but it was just enough to overwhelm the Visayas titlists for their fourth straight victory in Group B.

They will now gun for a title slot when they face PCU, the second-placer in Group A, in the cross-over semifinals tomorrow.

The Knights, the reigning NCAA champs, similarly took the top post in their group with a win over the 2004 champions to sweep their matches in Group A. They will battle UV for the championships berth.

Starting out cold, the Tamaraws, who missed stalwarts Arwind Santos, RJ Rizada and Mark Isip, trailed for most of the first half before putting their act together, coming around from 32-38 to lead, 46-43.

The Lancers, coached by PBA legends Boy Cabahug and Al Solis, tried to regain lost footing but could not shake off FEU's steadiness down the stretch.

The PCU Baby Dolphins asserted their mastery of the high school division with an 84-57 victory over the West Negros College junior dribblers.

PCU will go against San Beda, while NCAA titlist San Sebastian College takes on La Salle Zobel in the semis. The Staglets accomplished the same feat with a 99-78 win over St. Joseph School of Zamboanga.

PCHS, Amoranto win openers

PHILIPPINE CULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL LED opening-day winners in the 1st Uni-Orient Cup Table Tennis League recently at the Green Paddle Table Tennis Center in Caloocan City.

The PCHS aces downed Gold Wing, 3-1 in the event sponsored by Uni-Orient Travel and hosted by the Filipino-Chinese Table Tennis Club of North District (FCTTCND). Also winning their opening-day matches were Amoranto Table Tennis Club which blanked Chiang Kai Shek, 3-0; Xavier which repulsed St. Mary, 3-2; and Marclyn which ripped Diliman Preparatory School, 3-0.

"Our main thrust is to develop the youngsters, because their chance for improvement is still very high," said Charlie Lim, president of FCTTCNI. "We organize this first-ever table tennis league because we feel that it is very important for budding players to be exposed to tournament such as this to hone their talents and improve their skills."

SPORTSWATCH

Tipon, Pabila win in Melbourne

OLYMPIC hopeful Joan Tipon and upcoming Albert Pabila ruled their respective divisions in the recent Australian Tri-Nation boxing championships in Melbourne. Bantamweight Tipon, bext boxer in the Asian championships and gold medalist in the 23rd Southeast Asian Games, beat Australian national team member Nathan de Carlo, 32-20, while light flyweight Pabila mauled Romesh Fernando of host Australia, 47-35. "The results were good signs in our coming international campaign leading to Doha Asian Games," said Manny Lopez, president of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines. National coach Elmer Pamisa, said Tipon and Pabila emerged as crowd favorites.

Malaysia to stamp class in RP Open

MALAYSIA WILL PARADE A TALENT-LADEN ROSTER THAT INCLUDES THE world's No. 2 in the men's singles and the reigning SEA Games women's doubles champions when the first Bingo Bonanza Philippine Open Badminton Championships presented by PLDT Business Solutions is staged March 1-5 at the Philsports Arena. With world No. 1 Lin Dan of China opting to skip next week's blue-ribbon event to prepare for the tough China Masters, Lee Chong Wei will become the top-ranked player in the $120,000 tournament although he will have to contend with the likes of reigning world and Olympic champion Taufik Hidayat for the top plum worth $9,600 in the men's singles. For details, contact Joel Mabborang at 0926 5973222 or e-mail joebm_13@yahoo.com and aglipay@globequest.com.ph or log on to www.philippineopenbadminton.com.

Tight battle seen in CSI criterium

COMPETITION IS EXPECTED TO BE FIERCE WHEN THE SECOND LEG OF THE Philamlife Cycling Search Invitational (CSI) Criterium Race is flagged off this Saturday at the Marikina Heights Liwasan Kalayaan in Marikina City. The organizing Treo Sales and Management Corp. expects close to 200 riders in the one-day event, including those who saw action in the kick-off leg of the 10-stage series presented by Philpost in Tarlac last month. Registration is ongoing. For details, contact Treo at 241-0415 or 241-0418. Jeffrey Caritativo and Alexander Billon reigned supreme in the Tarlac leg with Caritativo ruling the 12-lap youth category and Billon topping the 15-lap masters division.

Kwok rules jr chess division

MALCOLM KWOK BEAT CARLO CARANYAGAN IN THE SEVENTH AND FINAL round to rule the junior division in the final evaluation tournament of the first series of 2006 Milo Checkmate Saturday-and-Sunday-only clinic held at St. Francis Square in Mandaluyong City. The 10-year-old Kwok, a grade three student of Jubilee Christian Academy wound up with a perfect score of 7.0 points. Arius Calanio of St. Andrews School won the under 12 section and Vincent Fuerte of Bagong Tanyag Elementary School in Taguig top the under 10 bracket. Michael Barbosa, 8, of UPIS and Shannon dela Peña, 5, of Park Place Learning Center topped the Under 8 and Under 6 sections, respectively.

Olivarez banners RP tennis team

PABLO OLIVAREZ II WILL SPEARHEAD THE PHILIPPINE TEAM IN THE JUNIOR Davis Cup competition set May 1-7 in Kuching, Malaysia. This is the second time that Olivarez, ranked No. 2 in the 16-under division, will represent the country in the event after his stint in Junior Davis Cup finals in Barcelona, Spain, last year. Also named to the squad were Joshua Tan Ho and Cebu-based Francis Largo. Martin Misa is handling the junior team.

Summer sports at SM malls launched

SPORTS ENTHUSIASTS AND MALL LOVERS CAN LOOK FORWARD TO A BUSY summer this season as the SM chain of malls has lined up various recreational activities and program beginning with the staging of the JVC Open Juniors Championships next month. Slated to begin on March 25-26 at the SM Megamall, the badminton meet now features three age-group division, which has among its major prizes gift items from JVC and a college educational plan worth P100,000 from Pioneer Life for the winners in the 10-and-under division.

Las Piñas hosts cockfest

A SMALLTIME COCKFEST WITH AN ENTRY FEE OF P1,100, DUBBED AS PAMIgay Premyo 3-cock derby sizzles at Las Piñas Coliseum today and on Saturday with more than 80 entries. The guaranteed prize is P110,000 or more, said coliseum manager Alex Tobias. A participant must hurdle the elimination round (1-cock) today to qualify for the finals (2-cock) on Feb. 25. Tobias also announced that paying patrons may win a Sweater Lemon battle cross from the Silang gamefarm of Mayor Nene Aguilar. Raffle draws will be held from Thursday to Sunday (hackfight). For details, call 873-1040 and 874-3910.

Heritage Cup at Araneta round 2

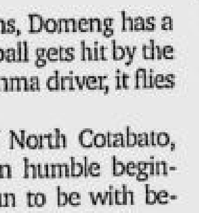
ROUND TWO OF THE PHILIPPINE HERITAGE CUP 2006 5-COCK DERBY BLASTS off today at the Araneta Coliseum featuring more than 100 fights. Action starts at 11 a.m. with Gran Matador and B-Meg Derby Ace as sponsors. A guaranteed prize of P600,000 is at stake for an entry fee of P10,000. Seven entries topped the first day of action last Tuesday, each with four wins and one loss: Steel Game GBAP of John Reyes and Danny Halili, BMJ Jody Red, Cristina of Tony Oppen, SR San Juan of Raul Adan, Lucban 531 of Anthony Lim, Katrina of Buddy Robregado and TG Chinese Sweater of Bagay Brothers . For details, contact 911-2928 and 911-3101.

Concrete Breaker derby Feb. 25

THE CONCRETE BREAKER 5-COCK DERBY WILL BE HELD ON SATURDAY AT the fully air-conditioned Makati Coliseum. Sponsor is B-Meg Derby Ace. A guaranteed prize of P500,000 will be disputed in this derby to be hosted by Makati sportsman Emil Chua. Entry fee is P22,000. Entries must be submitted tomorrow from 2-9 p.m. Call 896-3545 and 895-6475 for inquiries. Another 5-cock derby sizzles on Feb. 27 with newspaper publisher Jake Macasaet as host.

PAL Interclub tradition

SPECTATOR



Al S. Mendoza

DAVAO CITY—THE PAL INTERCLUB GOLF Tournament has not stopped growing. Year in and year out, the roster of entries gets bloated like a helium-powered balloon.

Take this year's edition.

A variety of players from five countries are entered totaling 710 from 71 teams. That's another record in this storied event that began 59 years ago by way of Philippine Airlines' way of fostering friendship among the nation's golfers—both the duffers and nationally-ranked players alike.

"We always adhere to tradition," said Domingo "Domeng" Duerme, the organizing committee chairman. "We welcome everybody here, whether one is a superstar or a mere earthmover. Of course, we value competition that's why we see fierce battles among the acknowledged masters of the game, including our own national players who are distributed in several topnotch teams. We at PAL are proud to have them play in the PAL Interclub as their presence definitely lends prestige to our tournament."

Duerme himself is an avid golfer. In fact, we played golf again yesterday—our third straight day, mind you.

First, we played Palos Verdes, a beautifully designed layout atop a hill outside this world's largest city, on Monday, Feb. 20.

Second, we sampled on Tuesday Apo Golf, the venue of the 1995 Philippine Open, whose inherent toughness—tight fairways, mature acacias providing built-in traps to wayward tee shots—is its main attraction.

Third, we were at Lanang yesterday. Generally acknowledged as the easiest of the three, dangers lurk in the course's water-laced par-3s, though.

"Like most golfers I know, the main reason I love golf is because it also gives me the relaxation I need to forget the pressures of everyday work," said Domeng, who is PAL's main man in the Visayas and Mindanao.

Endowed with Pop-eye arms, Domeng has a mean tee shot that, when his ball gets hit by the so-called sweet spot of his Honma driver, it flies no less than 300 yards.

An uncle of Gov. Piñol of North Cotabato, Domeng, who grew up from humble beginnings in M'lang, is always fun to be with because he is modest and very polite to a fault.

After we had holed out yesterday at Lanang, Domeng, in his 50s, didn't look tired at all.

"I guess we need to play nine more holes?" he said. "I'm just only starting to heat up."

Jake and I could only shake our heads, laughing.

Of course, we told him, it was time to take a rest.

The knees aren't that strong anymore.

* * *

Go Teng Kok, the track and field president, had the scare of his life—again.

His plane from Singapore to Manila a few days ago developed engine trouble 33,000 feet up in the sky and the pilot had to return the jet back to Singapore in 45 minutes.

"I called all my loved ones and my dearest friends from the jet mainly to report what was happening—and, of course, to also say goodbye in case something happened," he said.

Fortunately, nothing serious happened.

The plane landed safely in Singapore. After almost two hours, it took off again and landed safely in Manila some four hours later.

When Kleng Samson learned about it, he said, "Whatever is GTK's religion, let's all transfer to it."

In July 2003, GTK survived an ambush, the bullets hitting his cheeks deforming his face for life.

"This is my third life," GTK said. "What can I say if not thank our Lord God?"

* * *

FASTBREAK. Congratulations to Gonz Duque for having steered the Prisaa meet two weeks back to a smashing success. With his virtually hitch-free running of the national tournament, it's about time Gonz spearheads again the move to make Pangasinan host of the next Palarong Pambansa. Cheers!

* * *

E-mail at menju@pldtdsl.net

PHILIP Morris Philippines marketing director Maarten Kila shares a light moment with Marlboro brand manager Eric Carandang during the launch of the Marlboro Adventure Team recently at The Fort.

MAT trials eye 500,000 bets

MEN AND WOMEN OF VARIED SHAPES AND sizes and status in life will get a chance to experience the adventure of a lifetime in Moab, Utah, in the 11th staging of the Marlboro Adventure Team trials this summer.

New events, like paragliding, have been added to the list of challenges applicants will have to hurdle to make the grade, along with other tough tests like hiking, rappelling, rafting and riding motorcycles and quads.

The event was officially launched recently at The Fort in Taguig, to be followed by similar launch parties in Cebu this weekend and other regions in the coming weeks. A sendoff party for the five-member team to be sent to Moab is set later this year at Le Pavilion in Manila.

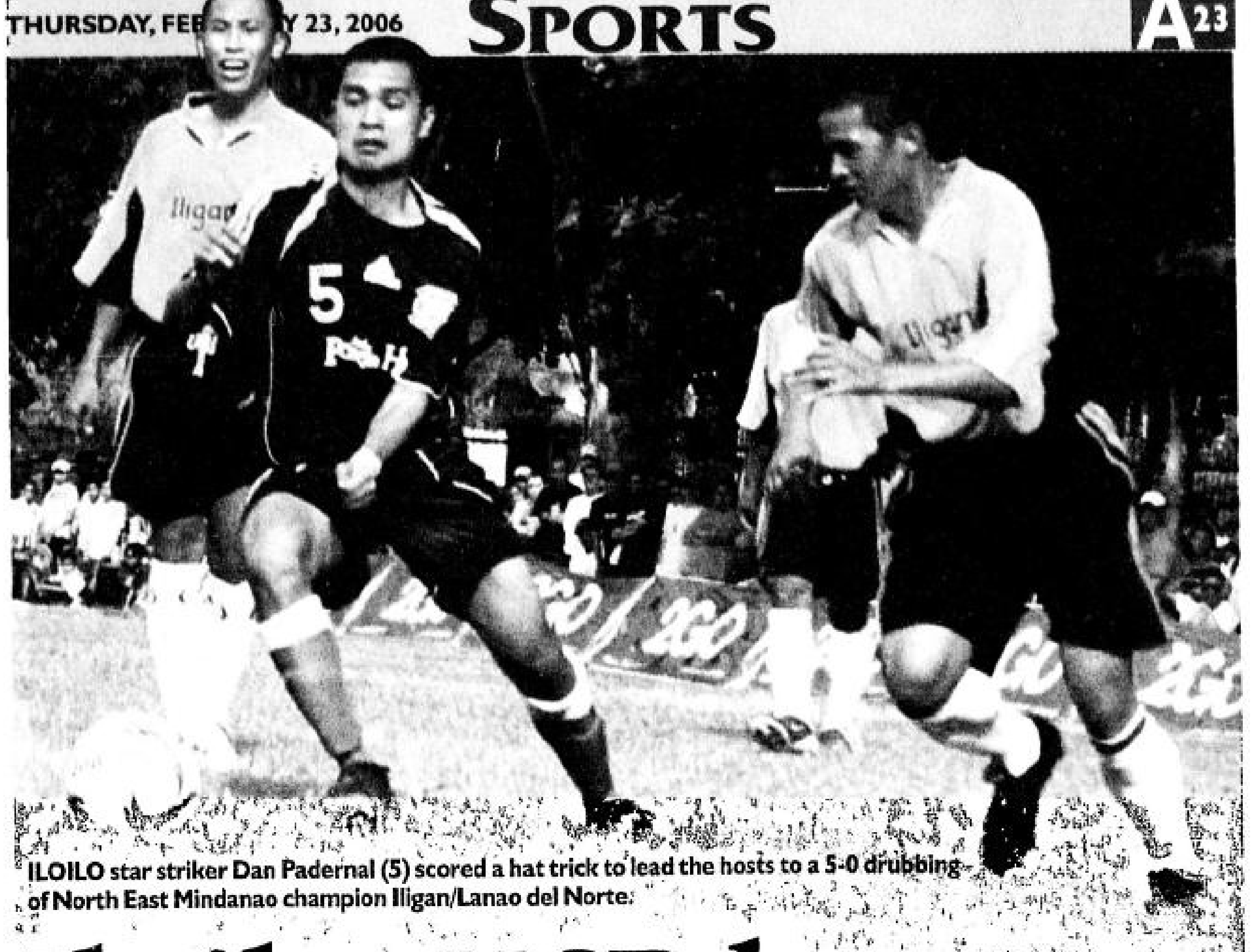
"MAT is the benchmark of adventure-type promotions in the Philippines and we want to make sure we keep it that way," said Marlboro brand manager Eric Carandang. "We expect this to be more exciting than the previous year. Every year, we try to raise the bar."

Carandang stressed that the MAT is not only for true-blue athletes, adding there are other important criteria aside from speed and agility. Doctors, students, businessmen and office clerks, among others, have made it to the previous Philippine MAT squads.

Applicants must be Filipino citizens residing in the Philippines, at least 18 years old and have a valid Philippine driver's license. Applicants may call 895-9999 for details.

The event drew a record 303,000 registrants last year and organizers expect the field this year to reach the half-a-million mark.

3-PEAT FOR UE FENCERS: University of the East's fencing team bagged its third straight overall title in the recent Escrima Liga National inter-school championships sponsored by the Philippine Amateur Fencers Association, PSC and 105.1 Crossover. Emmet Penson (in dark shirt), president of Escrima Liga organizer Team Ventures, presents the trophy to UE head coach Rufel Endriano and assistant coaches Rolando Canlas and Chester Uy.



ILOILO star striker Dan Padernal (5) scored a hat trick to lead the hosts to a 5-0 drubbing of North East Mindanao champion Iligan/Lanao del Norte.

Iloilo, NCR booters show way to semis

By Cedelf Tupas
PDI Visayas Bureau

BAROTAC NUEVO—TEAM BISCOcho House-Iloilo needed a wake-up call at halftime. It came from the people of this football-crazy town.

With the crowd of about 3,000 getting uneasy at the break because of a lackluster first-half performance, the Iloilo booters fought back from a goal down to notch a 5-2 triumph over Baguio and seize a semifinal berth in the PFF-National Men's Open Championship here.

"This one's for the people of Barotac. They did not want us to lose," said Iloilo coach Lurex Araneta.

Kenley Delgado struck twice in the first half to keep Iloilo afloat, before Ruben Doctora, Bervic Italia and Dan Padernal knocked in a goal each in the final half as Iloilo secured win No. 2 in Group B.

"It's difficult playing here, there's too much pressure on our part because the people know their football," said Doctora, who scored the go-ahead goal in the 70th minute from close range.

Iloilo's dramatic win almost overshadowed title-holder National Capital Region's 10-0 rout of Iligan in a game where RP members Ali Borromeo and Ian Araneta came up with a hat trick each.

It was NCR's second win in as many games in Group A, giving the Manileños another semis slot in the eight-team tilt.

Completing the semifinal cast were newcomer Northern Cotabato and Negros Occidental, which pulled off a 1-0 win over Zamboanga for its second victory.

Estimo, Torre hit back at Campo

THE FIRST BLUNDER THAT LED TO the chess debacle in the recent Southeast Asian Games was committed by no less than former Fide president Florencio Campomanes.

Lawyer Samuel Estimo, secretary general of the National Chess Federation of Philippines, said it was the man acknowledged as the father of RP chess who derailed the country's chances when he allowed the World Chess Federation to stage the World Chess Championship in Russia at exactly the same date as the SEAG chess competition.

"This man-made disaster deprived us of the services of Grandmaster Mark Paragua—the lone Southeast Asian super GM and the most bemedalled Filipino athlete in the 2003 Vietnam SEA Games," said Estimo in a press statement yesterday.

Without Paragua, who picked up three golds in Vietnam, the Filipinos absorbed an unexpected gold medal shutout in eight events last December.

Campomanes blasted the present chess leadership for the dismal SEAG showing the other day at the PSA Forum, saying: "We used to teach countries like China, Vietnam and India. Now they have surpassed us."

Estimo added that Campomanes, through a top Fide official, had proposed to be part of the SEAG organizing committee for chess, but the NCFP rejected the request.

"For reasons known only to him, the original schedule of the World Chess Championship was then changed to coincide with the SEA Games," said Estimo, adding that Campomanes flew on the same flight with Paragua to Russia.

He also denied charges of lack of grassroots development in chess, noting that the NCFP has regularly been staging tournament and lectures as far as Cagayan in the north and Iligan City in the south.

Asia's first GM Eugene Torre, who became one of the world's top players under Campomanes' guidance, also resented his old benefactor's advice "to give way so others will also have a chance."

"I say this advice should be better addressed to him," said Torre. "I feel that I can still contribute to the RP cause in the SEA Games, Asian Games and Olympiads. When the time comes for me to deposit my chess sets and clocks in a closet, I will assure Campo that he will be the first one to know. But before then, I sincerely request him to let me decide the right time when I will go." *NM Marlon Bernardino*

TERRY FULLERTON with Alessandra Madrigal

World kart champ coaching Madrigal

ALESSANDRA Racing announced that 10-year-old racing prodigy Alessandra Madrigal will have a new coach in the person of British karting legend and former world champion Terry Fullerton. "The time has come for Alessandra to learn more advanced techniques and sharpen her skills under a coach who has had extensive experience at the world level both as a driver and manager," said Alessandra Racing team owner Gerard Madrigal. Fullerton, who has a British Junior Championship, seven British Senior Championships, four European Championships and the 1973 World Karting Crown under his belt, will be taking over from Allan Uy, according to Alessandra Racing team manager Blue Reyna.

Lyceum stuns UST at home court

PLAYING BEFORE A BOISTEROUS home crowd, Lyceum University stunned University of Sto. Tomas, 85-81, for its first-ever win after five tries in the men's basketball competition in the Hail and Away Invitational League recently

Mark Ernest Fampulme, Fil-Am Rum Perry Scott and Arnel Calimag combined for 49 points and Dennis Lloyd Marcos added eight for the Pirates, who trailed, 30-41, at the half.

Lyceum outscored UST in the third frame, 25-20, and in the fourth, 30-20, to secure the win in the tournament organized by Waffle Marketing Inc., and supported by Adidas and Sunbolt.

Fampulme finished with 18 points, Calimag added 17 and Scott chipped in 14 to cushion another huge game by Jojo Duncil, who scored a game-high 32 points for the Growling Tigers. Jemal Vizcarra added 10.

The Lady Pirates, however, bowed to the UST Lady Growling Tigers, 67-56.

Three days after the loss to Lyceum, UST bounced back with a 70-62 win over De La Salle University.

UST completed its domination of La Salle, as its women's squad also prevailed against the Lady Archers, 66-54.

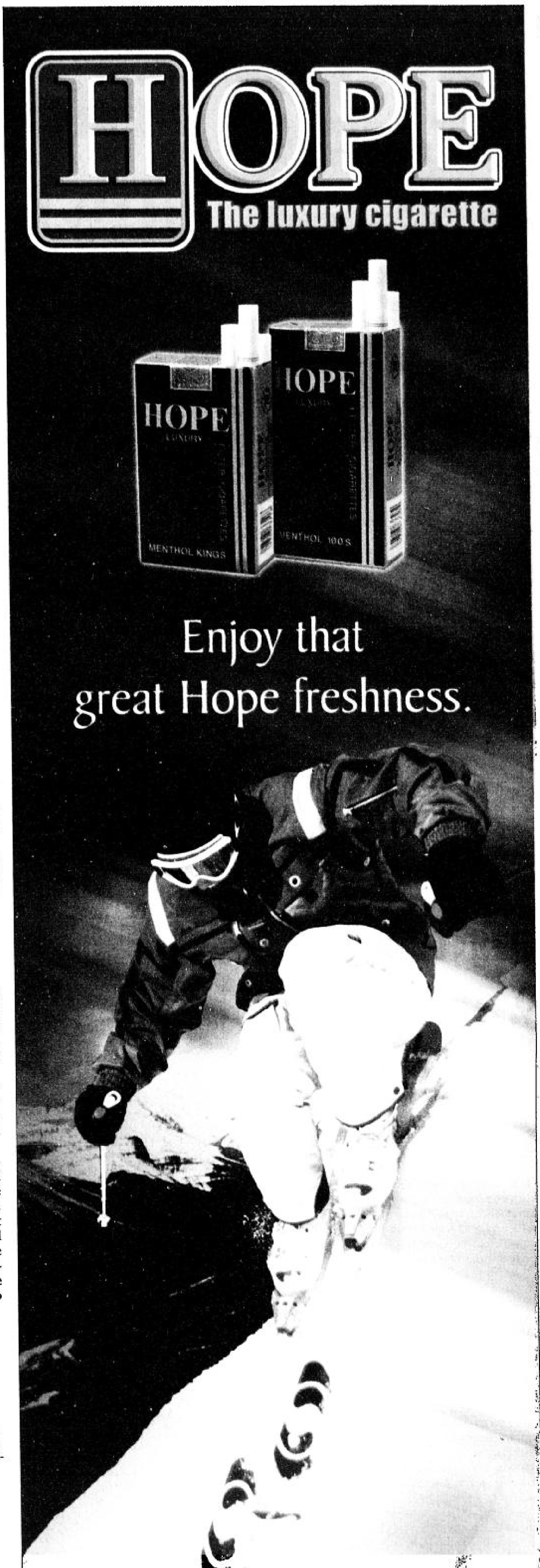
Rita Ann Vargas scored 17 points and Mary Elaine Orillano added 12 for UST.

RACING TIPS

BY TOP CHOICE

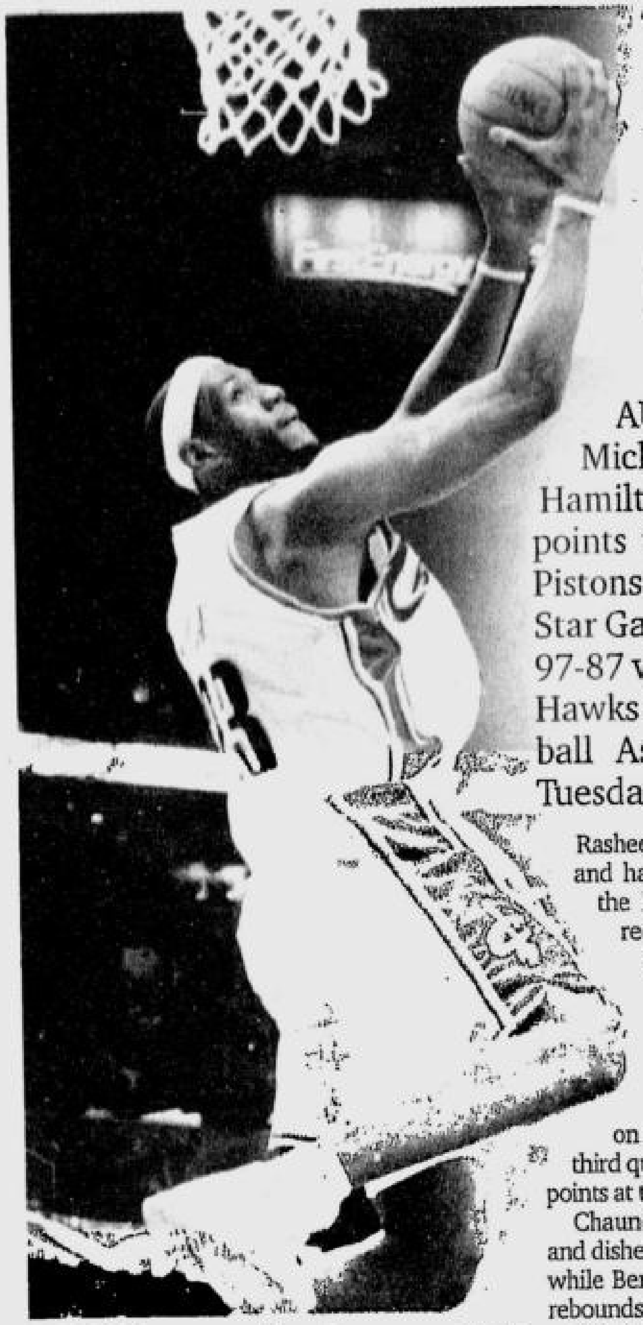
Race1-(Qrt/Tri)-Screaming Eagle (7), Gelay's Charm (3), Court General (5), Rebound (6)
Race 2-(Qrt/Tri)-Juan Marco (1), Seeing Red (5), Earth Angel (2), Cool Turner (6)
Race 3-(Qrt/Tri)-Sweet Connections (7), Aryaam (3), Penny Wise (2), Softas (1)
Race 4-(Qrt/Tri)-Ocean Deep (6), Shadowfax (3), Real Black (1), Crystal City (5)
Race 5-(Penta/Tri)-Detective Daryll (1), Slew Dancer (4), Tennessee (3), Dancing Queen (6), Yo Tero (8)
Race 6-(Qrt/Tri)-Movahead (5), Hazmagic (2), Ghurka (7), Virginia (1)
Race 7-(Penta/Tri)-Valentine Dancer (4), Sir Benjo (9), C'est Moi (3), Simply Gold (2), Brittney's Magic (5)
Race 8-(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)-Lolita (2), Davao Queen (3), Golden Pharaoh (4), Win After Win (8), Control Freak (11), Dream Cross (9)

MIXED PAIR: Sid Castro (right) and Richie Santos became the first male-female mixed team to finish runner-up in the recent 38th Golden Tee Invitational Tournament at the Manila Golf and Country Club in Makati City. Tying for first in Division III, the Castro-Santos duo had to settle for runner-up honors after the count back.



Government Warning: Cigarette smoking is dangerous to your health.

Pistons shoot down Hawks



LEBRON James soars for a slam. REUTERS

AUBURN HILLS, Michigan—Richard Hamilton scored 24 points to help the Detroit Pistons open the post All-Star Game schedule with a 97-87 win over the Atlanta Hawks in National Basketball Association play on Tuesday.

Rasheed Wallace added 21 points and hauled down 12 rebounds for the Pistons, who improved their record to 43-9, the best in the NBA.

The Pistons were led by their four all-stars, who helped the Eastern Conference beat the Western Conference in the annual game on Sunday, pulling away in the third quarter after leading by just two points at the half.

Chauncey Billups added 19 points and dished out 15 assists for the Pistons, while Ben Wallace had nine points, 17 rebounds and five blocks.

Hamilton, Billups and the two Wallaces played in the all-star game for Detroit, which won its second straight.

Tayshaun Prince, the only Pistons starter not to play in Houston, chipped in with 14 points for Detroit.

But the Pistons needed all five of their starters to contribute to beat the stubborn Hawks, as Detroit got only 10 points from its bench.

"I thought we executed when we needed to, in the second half," Detroit coach Flip Saunders told reporters.

Saunders coached his four starters in the All-Star Game and told reporters his team were a little out of synch after playing for the first time since the break.

Al Harrington led the Hawks with 20 points and 10 rebounds, but Atlanta slipped to 16-35 after winning five of their previous eight games.

Josh Childress added 18 points for the Hawks, while Josh Smith had 10 points and 15 rebounds.

"We played solid, but we made a few mistakes," Childress said.

"They are a veteran team with a lot of experience and if you make mistakes against them, they will hurt you."

In Indianapolis, Danny Granger scored 22 points and had 11 rebounds as the Indiana Pacers beat the New Orleans Hornets, 97-75.

In Cleveland, Zydrunas Ilgauskas scored 24 points and had 13 rebounds to help the Cavaliers beat the Orlando Magic, 105-92.

LeBron James added 26 points for the Cavaliers.

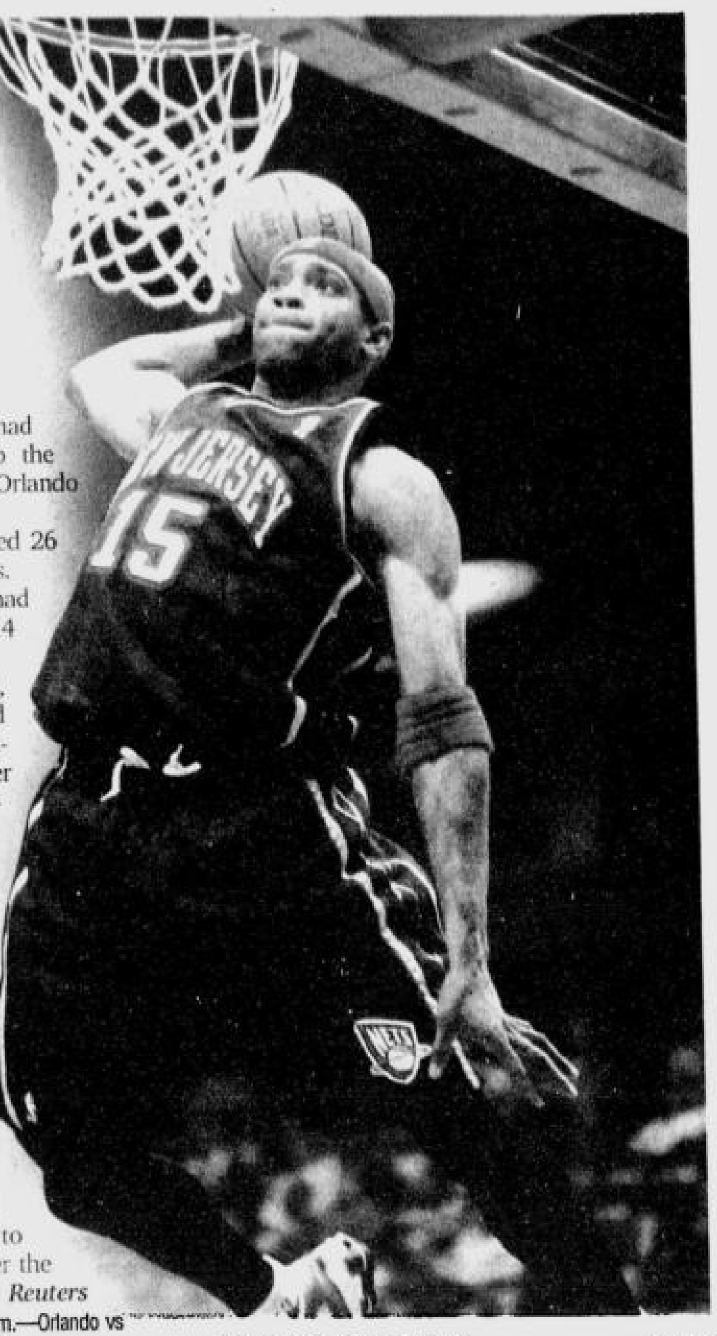
Dwight Howard had 23 points and had 14 boards for the Magic.

In Washington, Gilbert Arenas scored 34 points in the Wizards' 90-78 win over the Minnesota Timberwolves.

In Memphis, Pau Gasol scored 21 as the Grizzlies beat Toronto, 94-88.

In Milwaukee, Vince Carter starred with 45 points and Jason Kidd added 12 points, 12 rebounds and had 13 assists for a triple double to lead the New Jersey Nets to an 89-85 victory over the Bucks. *Reuters*

NBA on Solar: 8:30 a.m.—Orlando vs New Jersey (replay, 8 p.m.)



CARTER: 45 big points. REUTERS

'Lighter' Tiger still ready for World golf

CARLSBAD, CALIFORNIA—YOU CAN NEVER call Tiger Woods a lightweight on the golf course, but he is five pounds lighter after he suffered a fever for three days earlier this week.

The top seed will face No. 64 Stephen Ames in the first round of the 7.5 million-dollars World Match Play here Wednesday at the La Costa Resort and Spa.

It will be an interesting day for Woods because Ames, born in Trinidad and now a Canadian citizen, criticized Woods in an interview with the Calgary Herald, describing him "spoiled" and claimed that Woods was not the straightest driver in the world.

"Anything can happen, especially when he's hitting the ball," said Ames, who slipped into the 64-player event after three players, including Sergio Garcia, declined to play.

These words might motivate Woods to set the record straight with Ames. But he is pulling out of a fever that he says took five pounds off him.

"I'm not quite (100 percent) yet, but good enough," Woods said. "I had a fever for three days, didn't touch a club, didn't do anything. I tried to get my energy back up. Five pounds is a lot for me, so it's going to take a long time to put it back on."

Woods, who in six appearances has won this event twice and runner-up once, was diplomatic about Ames' latest comment.

"Stephen is very straight, very patient and it's going to be a good match," he said.

Ames also said this is the only tournament on the PGA Tour that is more exciting on the first day than the last.

Thirty-two players will go home Wednesday night, and if past form is any guide, some of the biggest names will be among them.

Among the interesting first round match-ups is defending champion David Toms who will face Englishman Ian Poulter.

Toms was brilliant last year, when scored a 6 and 5 victory over Chris DiMarco. *AFP*

Winter Olympics: Italian hushes American squabble

TURIN, ITALY—AN ITALIAN POLICEman quelled an American speedskating feud at the Winter Olympics—by taking the gold medal himself.

While Chad Hedrick and Shani Davis bickered over who was better credentialed to win the 1,500 meters at Oval Lingotto, Enrico Fabris went about the business Tuesday—setting the quickest time (1 minute, 45.97 seconds) with four pairs yet to race and holding on for his and Italy's second surprise speedskating gold medal of the Turin Games.

The triumph set off a chorus of "I-tal-ia, I-tal-ia" from the ever-swelling home crowd and silenced the Americans for a while.

Davis, who stormed out of a post-race press conference with Hedrick, had kinder words for Fabris than he did for his own teammate.

"I am very proud of him, he's a champion," said Davis.

Fabris became the first non-US skater to win an individual men's event at Turin—he earlier helped the Italians win the team pursuit and won a bronze medal in the 5,000.

ENRICO Fabris goes for the gold in men's speed skating. REUTERS

In figure skating, world champion Irena Slutskaya could only watch as Sasha Cohen's beautiful routine in the women's short program edged her for first place.

Cohen, aiming for the United States' third consecutive women's skate gold medal at an Olympics, leads by 0.3 points ahead of Thursday's decisive free skate.

A win there for Slutskaya would complete an unprecedented figure skating Olympic medal sweep for Russia at the Olympics.

Fabris wasn't the only member of Italy's police network pulling surprises at the Olympics. Italian authorities launched a second overnight raid on housing used by Austrian biathlon and cross country athletes or staff in the Italian Alps and uncovered more equipment linking disgraced ski coach Walter Mayer with possible blood doping. *AP*

Rich TCC Invitational starts today

CANLUBANG—THE COUNTRY CLUB INVItational gets going today with one of the biggest purses in local golf history and Frankie Miñoza making a rare appearance in a Philippine tournament.

Miñoza joins a stellar cast in the field of the P4-million event.

He faces the challenge of the likes of veterans Cassius Casas, Tony Lascuna, Robert Pactolerin, Danny Zarate and Mars Pucay and young turks Angelo Que, Gerald Rosales, Cookie La'O and defending champion Jerome Delariarte.

Newly-minted professionals Juvic Pagunsan and Artemio Murakami will also mount their charge.

But no one holds a distinct advantage at the daunting The Country Club, whose character and form change in every twirl of the wind.

The top prize is P1.2 million, put up by Ricky Razon in 2003 to honor the memory of his father, Don Pocholo.

Meanwhile, teener Debbie de Villa, the reigning RP Ladies Open champ, and national pool members Anya Tanpinco and Lora Roberto also see action in the event as part of their buildup for the Thailand Ladies Open.

Xavier School dribblers score double triumph

XAVIER SCHOOL SCORED A RARE golden double when it ruled both the Aspirants and Juniors divisions in the recent Tiong Lian basketball competitions at the UNO Gym.

The Aspirants, handled by Jojo Imutan, did the trick first, beating St. Stephen's high school squad, 72-71, in a one-game finals last Feb. 11 to cap their dominance in the event.

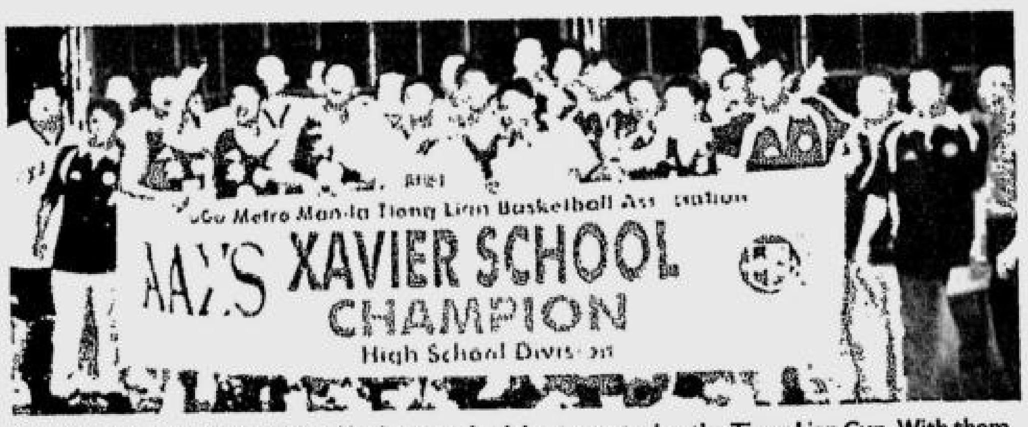
They won the title in grand fashion by stringing up nine straight wins for their fourth straight championship.

And last Thursday, Patrick Aquino's Juniors squad outclassed Chiang Kai Shek, 84-73, in their best-of-5 title series.

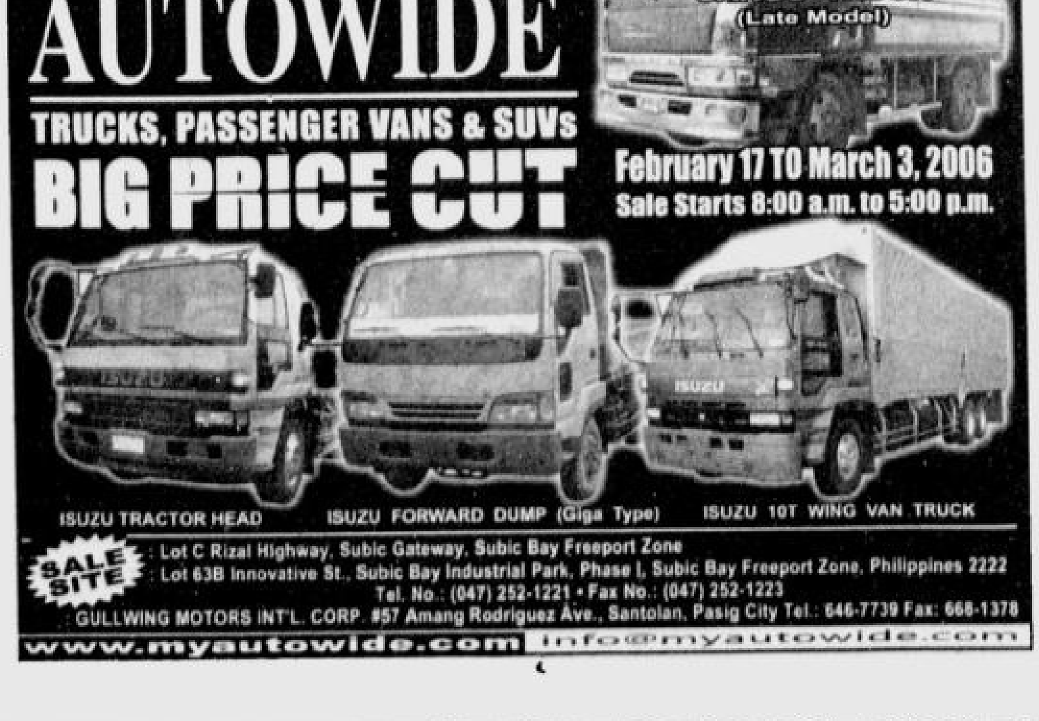
They also finished with an immaculate 9-0 win-loss card.

The game was closer than the final score indicated. The Stallions, who took Game 1, 72-61, encountered some scary moments but Charles Tiu and Marc Tio came to their rescue, scoring big baskets down the stretch to finally pull away for good.

Woody Co was voted as the tournament's most valuable player after the match.


Metro Manila Tiong Lian Basketball Association
XAVIER SCHOOL
CHAMPION
High School Division

MEMBERS of the Xavier School junior squad celebrate capturing the Tiong Lian Cup. With them are team manager Caesar Wongchuking, consultant Nemie Villegas and coach Pat Aquino.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Sports, showbiz luminaries try luck in 1st celebrity charity poker event

THE LIST OF CELEBRITIES TRYING on poker faces just got bigger.

Bowling international Hall of Fame inductee Bong Coo, Formula 3 driver and two-time Karter of the Year awardee JP Tuason join a stellar cast of 32 celebrities from sports, broadcast, business, modeling and showbusiness in the First Annual Celebrity Poker for a Cause presented by World Poker Tour (WPT) Philippines.

Hosted by Asia Agcaoili, the first part of the tournament will air tonight over Studio 23 at 10:30 p.m. ABS-CBN Sports is the local partner of WPT Enterprises, Inc.

Pagcor put up one million pesos prize money for donation to different charitable organizations, including pet charities of the Final Table Top 6.

Aside from Coo and Tuason, other sports personalities vying for the Final Table Top 6 are Ginebra forward Migs Noble, La Salle and Rain or Shine standout Junjun Cabatu, Olympian, Sports Talk anchor and ex-Senator Freddie Webb and broadcaster son, Jason Webb.

Aside from Coo, other ladies in the tournament are actresses Jacklyn Jose, Mylene Dizon, Jeni Hernandez, Angelu de Leon, Katya Santos, Happee Sy, model Aliya Parcs and Breakfast Super Size's Angel Rivero.

Also in the list are PBL's Butch Maniego, NCAA's Henry Atayde, ESPN and ABS-CBN Sports' Anthony Suntay, Studio 23's Sports Report anchor TJ Manotoc, Sports TV hosts Bobby Yan and Jinno Rufino and Hotwire host Joe Guerrero.

Band frontmen Chito Miranda of Parokya ni Edgar and Vince Alaras of South Border join other showbiz luminaries Alfie Lorenzo, Epy Quizon, KC Montero, Archie Alemania, Paolo Paraiso, Johnny Revilla, Joaquin Valdes, Reden Araneta, Gabb Drilon, Andrei Felix, and Franco Mabanta.

The champion will win P500,000 to be divided among for his or her chosen foundation, Bantay Bata 163, and a Pagcor-assigned charity. The winner gets a $25,000 seat in the WPT Celebrity Invitational in Los Angeles, California where Hollywood stars like James Woods and Ben Affleck will see action.

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

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ERIC Bana and Ayelet July Zurer in Spielberg's latest movie.

Why an R-13 for 'Munich'?

By Marinel R. Cruz

"'MUNICH' ISN'T ALL ABOUT violence. There are a lot of lessons to be learned from this movie," Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) chair Marissa Laguardia said on Tuesday.

INQUIRER Entertainment had sought Laguardia's reaction to criticisms that the board has received for giving the Steven Spielberg film an R-13 rating.

"It's a little violent," she said, "[but] it's not gory. It's done in good taste and has redeeming values. I watched it myself. The movie [exhorts viewers] to embrace their religion and ideals [but] to reflect before taking action."

"Munich" is set in the aftermath of the massacre of Israeli athletes in the Munich Olympics in 1972. Israel intelligence officer Avner (Eric Bana) leads an undercover team to assassinate the Palestinian terrorist group Black September, accused of plotting the Munich massacre.

"Even the 'pumping scene' being questioned—with Avner and his wife (Ayelet July Zurer)—wasn't vulgar. Only their faces were shown," Laguardia said.

She compared "Munich" to "Schindler's List," another Spielberg film. "That was even banned for a while, but was eventually shown on account of public clamor."

Cinemalaya drops FDCP

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

THE CINEMALAYA PHILIPPINE INDEPENDENT Film Festival, now on its second year, breaks away from the Film Development Council of the Philippines.

Announced at the festival launch last week was the list of organizers, now limited to Cinemalaya Foundation, Philippine Multi-Media System Inc. (PMSI), Cultural Center of the Philippines and UP Film Institute.

Antonio "Tonyboy" Cojuangco, owner of PMSI, confirmed this development in an exclusive interview with INQUIRER Entertainment: "We didn't envision Cinemalaya as a formation of different organizations. Rather, it's a gathering of like-minded individuals who share a passion for independent films."

He explained that the incorporators have been working together in the arts for decades.

Real value

"I met Nes Jardin [CCP president] through Tanghalang Pilipino," he said. "Nick Tiongson [dean, UP College of Mass Communications] was my professor in Ateneo. I met Laurice Guillen [Cinemalaya competition director] in college, when she was taking her master's. The late Rolando Tinio was our teacher."

When Cinemalaya was put up last year, Guillen was still FDCP chair. "Unfortunately," Cojuangco said, "she was unceremoniously kicked out of the council. We don't approve of what happened."

He insisted: "It wasn't the FDCP that was important to us; it was Laurice. More than the organizations, we value the incorporators."

Last year, the Cinemalaya Foundation was formed. In true indie spirit, it is autonomous from the public sector and the FDCP, the government body mandated to oversee the film industry.

However, Cojuangco said, "If there are areas of cooperation, we can still work with [the government]. We put a premium on continuity. We won't be around forever. This early, we are looking for young people who can eventually take over. We even plan to set up a Cinemalaya school and production company."

ROGER MARGALLO

LAURICE Guillen and Tonyboy Cojuangco: "Like-minded individuals."

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3	SYRIANA	11:55, 2:45, 5:35, 8:25, 11:00	R-13
4	FINAL DESTINATION 3	1:10, 3:30, 5:50, 8:10, 10:30	R-13

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MTRCB GP
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SYRIANA R13 2:20,5:00,7:40,10:20	CLOSE TO YOU GP 12:20,2:40,5:00, 7:20,9:40	MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA PG13 2:00,4:50,7:40,10:20

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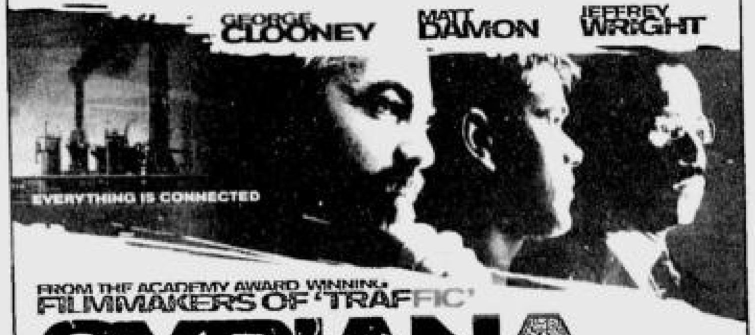
Peter Travers, Rolling Stone



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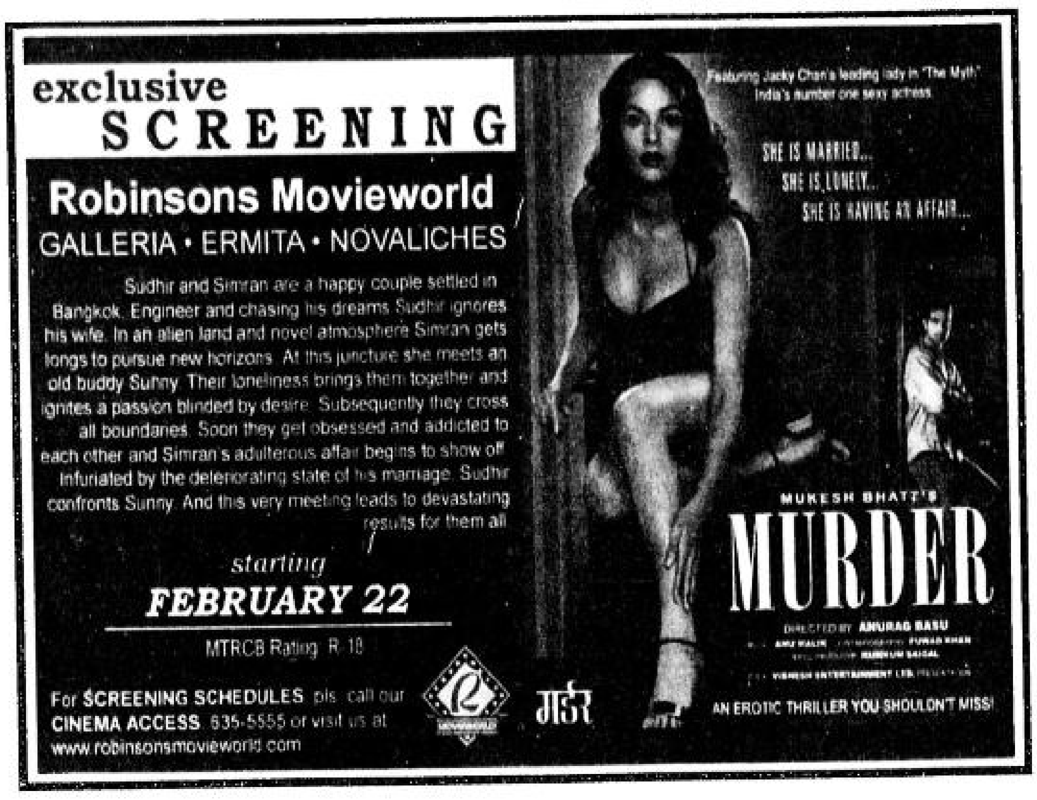
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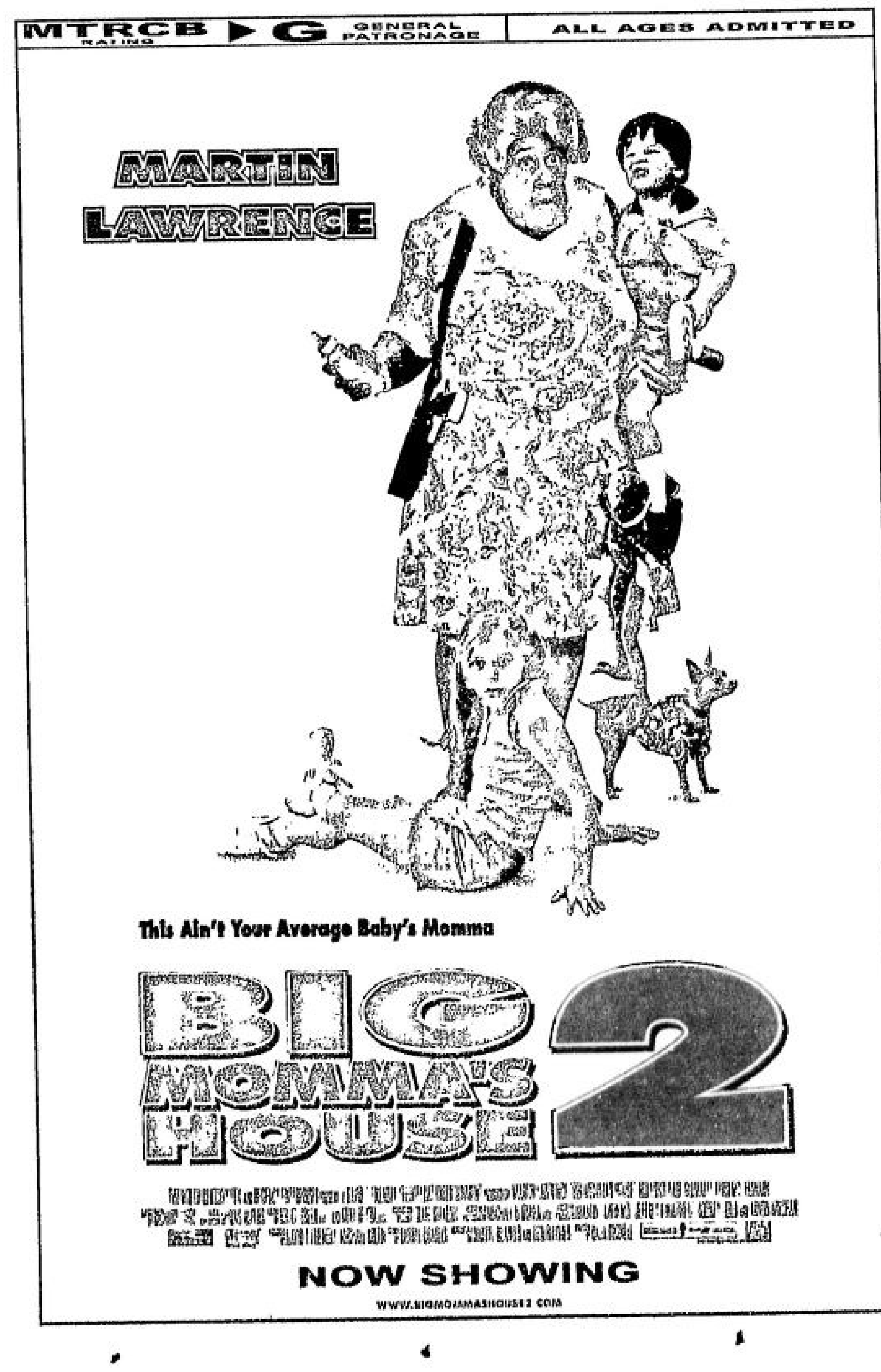
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ROUNDUP

NY screening

ARLENE AMI'S "I DO," a documentary on mail-order brides, will be screened 6 p.m. Thursday (Friday in Manila) at the Imaginasian Theater in Manhattan (239 E. 59th St), New York City.

The special showing commemorates the seventh anniversary of the Purple Rose Campaign Against Sex Trafficking, and is spearheaded by Gabriela Network.

"I Do" chronicles the journey of four women from the Philippines who become wives and mothers in a foreign land. A panel discussion on sex trafficking follows the screening.

The NY Purple Rose campaign was launched in 1999 by GABNet, a Philippine-US women's solidarity mass organization. The movement is active in 11 countries. ***Rita Villadiego***

Nene's life

THE LIFE of Nene Tamayo, first-ever Pinoy Big Brother winner, is the featured story tonight on ABS-CBN's "Maalaala Mo Kaya." Jerry Lopez-Sineneng directs from a script by Arlene Tamayo.

Meryll Soriano plays the lead role.

Top 10

LOS ANGELES—"Eight Below," a tale of survival among abandoned sled dogs, was the leader of the box-office pack with a $25 million opening over the four-day US holiday weekend.

Estimated ticket sales at US and Canadian theaters, according to Exhibitor Relations, official trackers:

1) "Eight Below," $25M; 2) "Date Movie," $22.3M; 3) "The Pink Panther," $21M; 4) "Curious George," $15.3M; 5) "Final Destination 3," $12.5M; 6) "Firewall," $10.3M; 7) "Freedomland," $7M; 8) "Big Momma's House 2," $5.85M; 9) "When a Stranger Calls," $5.8M; 10) "Nanny McPhee," $5.1M ***AP***

Bond girl

LOS ANGELES—French actress Eva Green, 25, is the new girl who will charm British superspy James Bond in "Casino Royale." She was picked for the coveted role of the enticing Vesper Lynd opposite actor Daniel Craig in his first outing as 007 in the 21st movie in the legendary Bond series. ***AFP***

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PRIDE & PREJUDICE

Eating nostrils and other boob-tube booboos

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

HOST: WHAT WERE THE CONCLUSIONS OF the group about the reasons for the resulting commotion?

Guest: Well, first of all and basically, the security is lack.

(Ah, so...)

***

Host: How important is scent in cooking? The scent of the dish we cook?

Guest: Oh, it's very important. Scent is the confirmation of our nostrils' desire to eat!

(Do you eat through your—nose?)

***

Host: What is young fashion? How is it different from fashion for mature women?

Guest: Fashion for young women should make you bounce!

(Boink! Boink! Boink!)

***

Host: What is your group's objective?

Guest: We want unity of faith. We want to link up with other Christian dominations.

(—To end up dominating them?)

***

Host: I thought you were working in a call center?

Guest: I applied, but sad to say, *hindi ako tinanggap, dahil sa buhok ko, masyado daw* dry and limp!

(Not like in the shampoo commercials, huh?)

***

Host: What should I wear for a job interview?

Guest: To make a good first impression, use an outfit that will platter your pigure.

(Ok, pine.)

***

Host: What is your organization's goal this year?

Guest: If possible, we want to quantify the quality of our projects.

(How do you plan to do *that?*)

***

Host: What is your advice to young graduates this year?

Guest: Don't give up, keep working hard even if it's hard!

(*How* hard can it get?!)

***

Host: What have you learned from your successes, as well as your failures, in your outstanding career?

Guest: Planning is everything. If you have a good and detailed plan, as the saying goes, success is only one length arm away!

(No, that's *not* how the saying goes!)

***

Host: Do you have any final words for our viewers?

Guest: Above all, please understand us before you judge us—that's what we would like to appear to the public.

(*Ay*, appear!)

***

Host: Why are you a teacher?

Guest: Because there are many positive values we need to impark to our students.

(*Ay*, impark!)

***

Host: Why was there so much security at the conference—was there a terrorist threat?

Guest: No specific threat, but we do not let our guards down.

(Yes, all 120 of them!)

'Art of Life'

CNN expands its feature program line-up with a new monthly show, "Art of Life," exploring the art of luxury living. It airs on Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays and is presented by CNN anchor Monita Rajpal.

Each show takes viewers to some of the world's most exclusive and exciting locations, offering insights into industries that make spending time and money a pleasure.

Post-V show

JENINE Desiderio stars in a a post-Valentine concert, "Jenine Hits the Peak," on Saturday, 9 p.m. at the Thrams Bar and Restaurant. Featured bands are The Blithe, Bigger Than Normal and Interlude. Call TicketWorld, 819-9999 or Thrams, 410-0670.

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NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1 FINAL DESTINATION 11:40, 1:55, 4:05, 6:15, 8:25, 10:35 R13
CINEMA 2 PINK PANTHER 11:00, 1:15, 3:30, 5:45, 8:00, 10:20 GP
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

PROMENADE GREENHILLS
...a dinetertainment for all!
NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 3 SYRIANA 11:00, 1:55, 4:45, 7:35, 10:25 R13
CINEMA 4 BIG MOMMAS HOUSE 2 10:40, 1:00, 3:20, 5:40, 8:00, 10:20 GP
CINEMA 5 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA 10:40, 1:35, 4:25, 7:15, 10:10 PG13

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.

MUSIC MUSEUM
FEBRUARY 23, 2006 JULIA CLARETE 9:00PM
March 30, 2006 RICO J. PUNO 9:00PM

TEATRINO PROMENADE GREENHILLS
TEATRINO DANCE NIGHT every MONDAY starting MARCH 6 7PM
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THE FUNNIEST FILM FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY THIS FEBRUARY!

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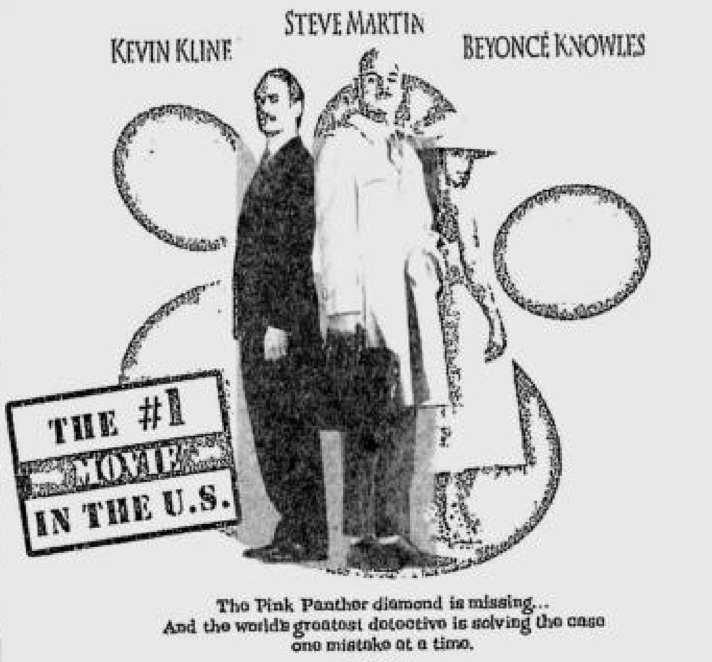

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The Pink Panther diamond is missing...
And the world's greatest detective is solving the case one mistake at a time.

THE PINK PANTHER

NOW SHOWING

2ND 'CINDERELLA LOVE STORY' DAY!
MTRCB ▶ PG-13

MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
FROM THE DIRECTOR OF 'CHICAGO'
www.SonyPictures.net
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ARANETA CENTER
Gateway Ali MALL FarmersPlaza

THE ONLY CINEPLEX IN THE COUNTRY
Gateway CINEPLEX*10
DOLBY DIGITAL-EX

BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE 2 1:05/3:15/5:25/7:35/9:45
MEMORIES OF A GEISHA 1:10/4:00/6:50/9:40
CLOSE TO YOU 12:30/2:50/5:10/7:30/9:50
FINAL DESTINATION 3 12:50/3:00/5:10/7:20/9:30
FIREWALL 1:50
AEON FLUX 15/4:30/6:45/9:00
PELIKULA AT LIPUNAN 5:00/9:00
MEMORIES OF A GEISHA 12:30/3:20/[illegible]/9:00
SYRIANA 12:50/3:40/6:30/9:20
BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN 1:20/4:10/7:00/9:50
PINK PANTHER 2:00/4:30/7:00/9:30

Ali MALL CINEMAS

CLOSE TO YOU 12:00 R3/1:40/4:00/6:20/8:40
SYRIANA 12:05/2:55/5:45/8:35
BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE 2 12:00/2:10/4:20/6:30/8:40
I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU 12:30/3:00/5:30/8:00
MEMORIES OF A GEISHA 12:15 R3/2:15/5:05/7:55
DOLBY DIGITAL DTS SDDS

For ticket inquiries, please call TicketNet at 911-5555 or log on to www.ticketnet.com.ph

ARANETA COLISEUM
WWE RAW LIVE TOUR FEB.24, FRI 6 pm & FEB. 25 SAT 4 pm
Bb PILIPINAS CORONATION NIGHT MARCH 4, SATURDAY 8 pm

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS MOVIE GUIDE

CINEMA ACCESS
635-5555
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www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

MOVIES/SCHEDULES/PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

GALLERIA 632-9118
1 SYRIANA • THX
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 MURDER
4 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
5 FINAL DESTINATION 3
6 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
7 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
8 AEON FLUX
9 PINK PANTHER
10 THE BRIDGE OF SAN LUIS REY

ERMITA 536-7809 lo.42
1 CLOSE TO YOU
2 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
3 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
4 MURDER
5 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
6 FINAL DESTINATION 3
7 SYRIANA

METRO EAST 682-8193 / 682-8199
1 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
2 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
3 SYRIANA
4 PINK PANTHER
5 MGA BATANG BANGKETA
6 FINAL DESTINATION 3
7 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
8 CLOSE TO YOU

NOVALICHES 936-3231 / 936-3229-30
1 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
2 PINK PANTHER
3 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
4 CLOSE TO YOU
5 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
6 MURDER

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575
1 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER 687-6378
1 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
2 SYRIANA
3 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
4 FINAL DESTINATION 3

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STA. ROSA (049) 837-0907
1 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 BLOODRAYNE 2
4 GOAL
5 MUNICH

LIPA (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870
1 UNDERWORLD 2
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 MUNICH
4 GOAL
5 FIREWALL

DASMARIÑAS
1 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
4 SAW 2
5 NEW WORLD

ANGELES (045) 892-2349
1 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 NEW WORLD
4 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU

IMUS (046) 875-3838
1 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
2 NEW WORLD
3 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
4 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
5 CLOSE TO YOU
6 AEON FLUX

STARMILLS (045) 875-1927
1 BLOODRAYNE
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
4 GOAL
5 NEW WORLD
6 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA

BACOLOD
1 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 WALK THE LINE
4 PINK PANTHER
5 UNDERWORLD 2
6 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN

ILOILO (033) 338-8070
1 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 MUNICH
4 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
5 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
6 BLOODRAYNE

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Activity Center
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Feb 25, 11am, 3pm & 6pm
Feb 26, 3pm & 6pm

Activity Center
March 1, 3pm & 6pm
March 2, 3pm & 6pm

Activity Center
March 4, 11am, 3pm & 6pm
March 5, 11am, 3pm & 6pm

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GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	AYALA CENTER CEBU
Rexona for Men Live Extreme February 23, 2006	Baby Looney Tunes In The Bwave Little Hero February 24 to 26, 2006	Child Development Center of Cebu's Commencement Rites Februray 28, 2006

AYALA GREENBELT

Ayala Greenbelt's Chocolate Festival
February 13 to 28, 2006

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Repertory Philippines presents
I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE
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February 17 to 19, 24 to 26, March 3 to 5, 10 to 12, 2006
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Or visit www.ayalamuseum.org

AYALA CINEMAS

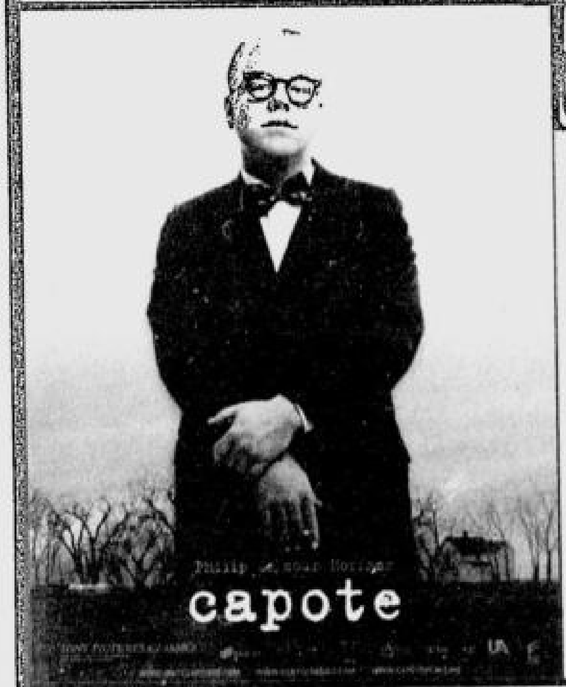
AYALA CINEMAS THX

Reserve your seats by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.

Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification call 729 7777

Mall	Cinema	Title	Schedule
G1 Glorietta 1	1	CLOSE TO YOU	
	2	BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE 2	
	3	FINAL DESTINATION 3	
	4	MGA BATANG BANGKETA	
G4	1	SYRIANA	
	2	FINAL DESTINATION 3	
	3 THX	MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA	2:00, 4:50, 7:40, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS
	4	PINK PANTHER	
	5	BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN	
	6	BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE 2	
	7	CLOSE TO YOU	
GB1	1	AEON FLUX	
	2	MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA	
GB3	1 THX	SYRIANA	12:50, 3:30, 6:10, 8:50, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS
	2 THX	MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA	2:10, 5:05, 8:00, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS
	3	MUNICH	1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS
	4	BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN	1:00, 3:40, 6:20, 9:00 GUARANTEED SEATS
	5	BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE 2	12:50, 2:55, 5:00, 7:05, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS
ATC Alabang Town Center	1 THX	MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA	
	2	BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE 2	
	3	SYRIANA	
	4	PINK PANTHER	
	5	FINAL DESTINATION 3	
ACC Ayala Center Cebu	1	MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA	
	2	RUMOR HAS IT	
	3	AEON FLUX	
	4	CLOSE TO YOU	

opens march 1 exclusively at ayala cinemas



5 ACADEMY AWARD NOMINATIONS
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BEST DIRECTOR BENNETT MILLER

capote

"Philip Seymour Hoffman's unmissable & unforgettable performance as Truman Capote makes him the front runner for every Best Actor prize in the book. Great acting is quicksilver, impossible to pin down in words. But you know it when you see it. And you see it with dazzling clarity in this landmark portrayal. 'CAPOTE' is a movie that doesn't pull its punches. It's a KNOCKOUT!"
– Peter Travers, ROLLING STONE

"Two thumbs way up."
EBERT & ROEPER

"A clear, steady gaze graces the smart biopic 'Capote,' which takes a mordant look at Truman Capote at the time he was writing 'In Cold Blood.' It's an etched-in-acid portrait of a writer whose talent was as ruthless as it was brilliant.
David Ansen, NEWSWEEK

Customer Service text hotline:	0917 6095900
Customer Service text hotline:	Glorietta - 752 7272; from 10am to 8pm Greenbelt - 757 4853; from 11am to 12mn
Alabang Town Center -	842 2782; from 10am to 8pm
Ayala Center Cebu -	(032) 231 5342 loc 324

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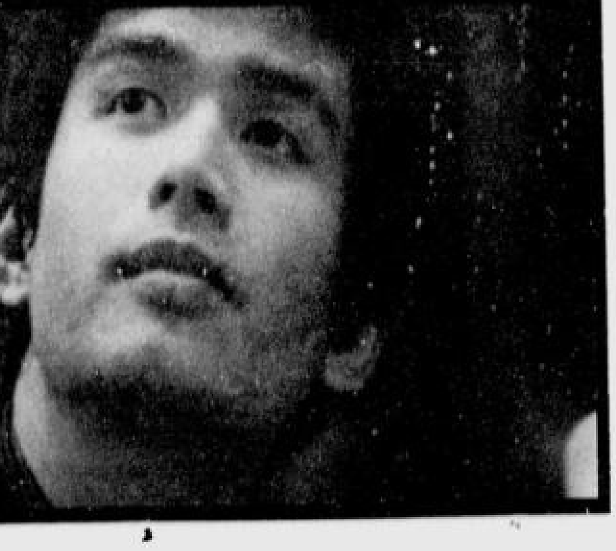
1. Close to you
2. Syriana
3. Final Destination 3
4. Memoirs of Geisha
5. Big Momma's House 2

EVENTS! EVENTS!

Christian Bautista
Completely
MALL TOUR



Pavilion Mall
Feb. 18, Saturday, 4pm

Metro Point Mall
Feb. 25, Saturday, 4pm

Market! Market!
Feb. 26, Sunday, 4pm

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Free LOWER BOX TICKET for every purchase of 1(one) Rex CD + med. Popcorn & Drink! P 500.00

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MTRCB Rating PG-13

GUARANTEED SEATS

THE PODIUM 833-8076

1 MEMORIES OF GEISHA
12:00FS / 12:20 MF / 03:10 / 06:00
08:20 LFS / 09:00 LMF / 11:20 END

2 SYRIANA
12:30FS / 12:50 MF / 03:30 / 06:10
08:20 LFS / 09:00 LMF / 11:00 END

MEGAMALL

3 MEMORIES OF GEISHA
10:15 FS / 10:40 MF / 01:30 / 04:20 / 07:10
09:30 LFS / 10:00 LMF / 12:20 END

CEBU (032) 231-3076

1 RESERVED

2 MEMORIES OF GEISHA
11:20FS / 11:30 MF / 02:00 / 04:30 / 07:00
09:22 LFS / 09:30 LMF / 11:50 END

3 AEON FLUX
11:20FS / 11:30 MF / 01:30 / 03:30 / 05:30
07:30 / 09:05 LFS / 09:30 LMF / 11:05 END

moviletime

METRO MANILA

SM MEGAMALL
- MEMORIES OF GEISHA
- BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
- FINAL DESTINATION 3
- RESERVED
- FIREWALL
- SYRIANA
- MGA BATANG BANGKETA
- PINK PANTHER
- CLOSE TO YOU
- AEON FLUX
- I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
- FUN WITH DICK AND JANE

SM CITY STA. MESA
- MEMORIES OF GEISHA
- SYRIANA
- BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
- FINAL DESTINATION 3
- CLOSE TO YOU
- PINK PANTHER
- AEON FLUX
- I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
- FIREWALL
- MGA BATANG BANGKETA

SM CITY BICUTAN
- BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
- MEMORIES OF GEISHA
- CLOSE TO YOU
- FINAL DESTINATION 3

SM SUPERCENTER VALENZUELA
- PINK PANTHER
- BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
- CLOSE TO YOU
- MEMORIES OF GEISHA

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
- PINK PANTHER
- MGA BATANG BANGKETA
- NEW WORLD
- AEON FLUX
- CLOSE TO YOU
- MEMORIES OF GEISHA
- FINAL DESTINATION 3
- I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
- BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
- FIREWALL
- SAW 2
- SYRIANA

SM CITY SOUTHMALL
- MEMORIES OF GEISHA
- BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
- FINAL DESTINATION 3
- CLOSE TO YOU
- AEON FLUX
- SYRIANA
- MGA BATANG BANGKETA
- I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
- PINK PANTHER
- RESERVED

SM SUPERCENTER SUCAT
- BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
- FINAL DESTINATION 3
- CLOSE TO YOU
- MEMORIES OF GEISHA

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
- MEMORIES OF GEISHA
- CLOSE TO YOU
- AEON FLUX
- RESERVED
- MGA BATANG BANGKETA
- BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
- SYRIANA
- FINAL DESTINATION 3

SM CITY MANILA
- FINAL DESTINATION 3
- MEMORIES OF GEISHA
- SAW 2
- PINK PANTHER
- BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
- AEON FLUX
- MGA BATANG BANGKETA
- NEW WORLD
- CLOSE TO YOU
- I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
- FIREWALL
- SYRIANA

SM CITY SAN LAZARO
- FINAL DESTINATION 3
- BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
- MEMORIES OF GEISHA
- SYRIANA
- MGA BATANG BANGKETA
- CLOSE TO YOU

LUZON

SM CITY PAMPANGA
- I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
- MEMORIES OF GEISHA
- BLOODRAYNE
- PINK PANTHER
- NEW WORLD
- CLOSE TO YOU

SM CITY BAGUIO
- BLOODRAYNE
- THE MAID
- CLOSE TO YOU
- MEMORIES OF GEISHA

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO
- AEON FLUX
- PINK PANTHER
- MGA BATANG BANGKETA
- CLOSE TO YOU

SM CITY BACOOR
- FIREWALL
- PINK PANTHER
- FINAL DESTINATION 3
- BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
- AEON FLUX
- CLOSE TO YOU
- I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
- MEMORIES OF GEISHA

SM CITY STA. ROSA
- GOAL
- BLOODRAYNE
- I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
- CLOSE TO YOU

SM CITY MARILAO
- FIREWALL
- CLOSE TO YOU
- I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU
- NEW WORLD

SM CITY DASMARINAS
- NEW WORLD
- CLOSE TO YOU
- CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
- MEMORIES OF GEISHA

SM CITY LUCENA
- UNDERWORLD 2
- WALK THE LINE
- THE MAID
- CLOSE TO YOU

SM CITY BATANGAS
- FIREWALL
- NEW WORLD
- GOAL
- CLOSE TO YOU

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU
- RESERVED
- MEMORIES OF GEISHA
- AEON FLUX
- RUMOR HAS IT
- PROOF
- BLOODRAYNE
- CLOSE TO YOU
- PINK PANTHER

SM CITY ILOILO
- BLOODRAYNE
- RESERVED
- UNDERWORLD 2
- MUNICH
- CLOSE TO YOU
- CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
- RESERVED
- MEMORIES OF GEISHA

SM CITY DAVAO
- CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
- BLOODRAYNE
- PINK PANTHER
- CLOSE TO YOU
- MUNICH
- MEMORIES OF GEISHA

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
- UNDERWORLD 2
- CLOSE TO YOU
- MEMORIES OF GEISHA
- SAW 2

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

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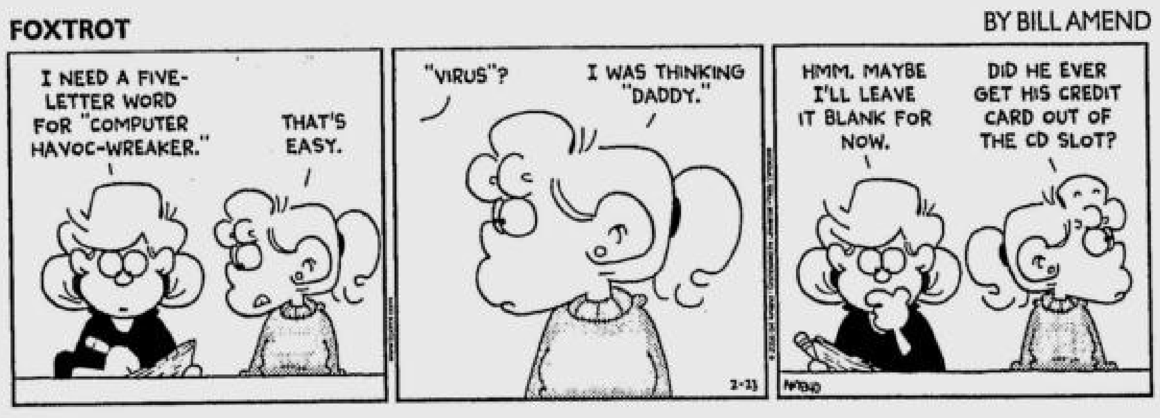
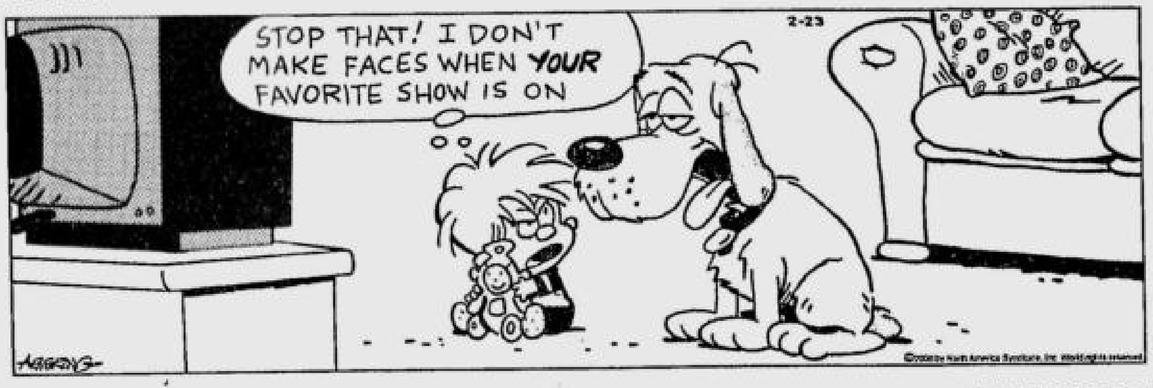
FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

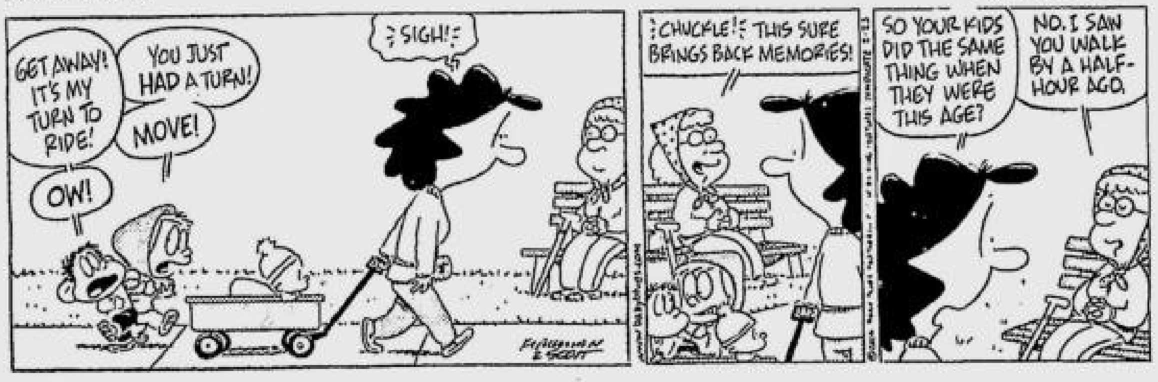
FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND


I NEED A FIVE-LETTER WORD FOR "COMPUTER HAVOC-WREAKER."
THAT'S EASY.
"VIRUS"?
I WAS THINKING "DADDY."
HMM. MAYBE I'LL LEAVE IT BLANK FOR NOW.
DID HE EVER GET HIS CREDIT CARD OUT OF THE CD SLOT?
2-23

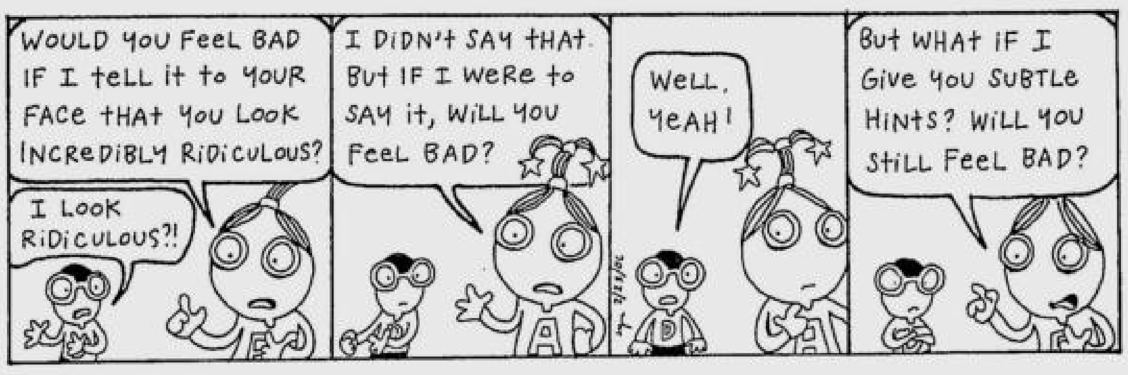
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


STOP THAT! I DON'T MAKE FACES WHEN YOUR FAVORITE SHOW IS ON
2-23

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


GET AWAY! IT'S MY TURN TO RIDE!
YOU JUST HAD A TURN!
MOVE!
OW!
SIGH!
CHUCKLE! THIS SURE BRINGS BACK MEMORIES!
SO YOUR KIDS DID THE SAME THING WHEN THEY WERE THIS AGE?
NO. I SAW YOU WALK BY A HALF-HOUR AGO.

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WOULD YOU FEEL BAD IF I TELL IT TO YOUR FACE THAT YOU LOOK INCREDIBLY RIDICULOUS?
I LOOK RIDICULOUS?!
I DIDN'T SAY THAT. BUT IF I WERE TO SAY IT, WILL YOU FEEL BAD?
WELL, YEAH!
BUT WHAT IF I GIVE YOU SUBTLE HINTS? WILL YOU STILL FEEL BAD?

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: There are several sides to you. Your style flexes. You're pragmatic. You're an excellent problem-solver because you have a fine, analytical mind. You're also a convincing communicator through writing, teaching, sales or acting. You have your feet on the ground. The year ahead is fun-loving, social and wonderful for relationships.

Birthdate of: Peter Fonda, actor; Kristin Davis, actress; Dakota Fanning, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Your ability to sweet-talk bosses and important people is amazing today! Now is the time to ask for permission for something. Or perhaps you want to suggest a project?

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This is an excellent day to make travel plans or do anything connected with higher education, publishing and the media. People will cooperate with you now.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): If you ask for extra staff, increased resources or help from others, you'll get it today. (The odds are very good.) Don't be afraid to speak up, because you're rowing with the tide.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Now is the time to discuss your ideas about publishing, the media or whatever you believe in. You're a regular smooth talker today! People believe you.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You know exactly what to do today with the wealth of others or things that other people own. Some kind of advantage will help you improve your job or get a better one!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Talk to partners and close friends today. Make plans for parties and social occasions in the future. Or perhaps, you just want to party today! Why not?

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Coworkers are very supportive and helpful today. They might even help you in a personal, domestic way. Someone could come to your home and please you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): This is a wonderful day for a party. It's also a great day for playful activities with children. You feel witty, prankish and in the mood for fun.

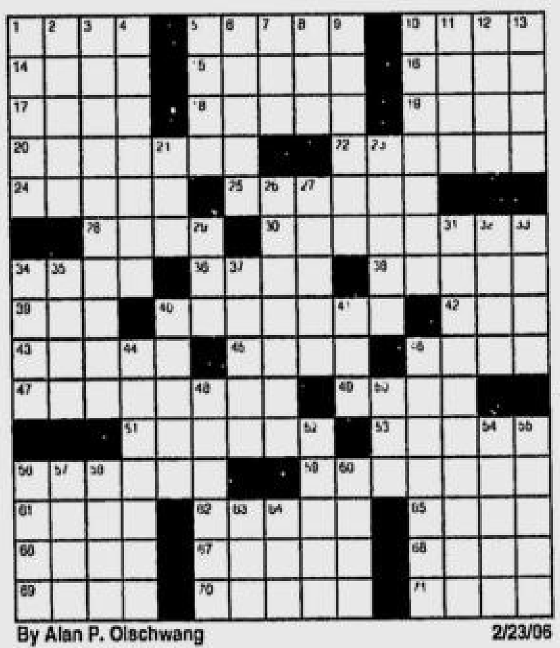
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Family discussions—especially discussions about money, businesses or purchasing something—are fruitful today. You can also make money from home today.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You can definitely earn money writing, selling, teaching or marketing today. Your words can turn into cash. This is an excellent day to sign contracts or enter into negotiations with others.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Write down some of your money-making ideas. They're definitely worthwhile. All Aquarians are born 50 years ahead of their time. Don't listen to others who might try to discourage you.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): This is a lovely day to enjoy the company of friends and groups. Accept all invitations; extend a few yourself. Be social and friendly to everyone you meet.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Alan P. Olschwang
Huntington Beach, CA
2/23/06

ACROSS
1 Smacking blow
5 Slink
10 Road choice
14 Cash drawer
15 "Plaza Suite" setting
16 Jai __
17 Blues singer James
18 Revere
19 Unused
20 Start of Molly McGee quote
22 Part 2 of quote
24 Categorizes
25 Bony
28 Close in on
30 Part 3 of quote
34 Set the pace
36 Rounded ottoman
38 Merits
39 Deed
40 Part 4 of quote
42 Pen fluid
43 Fingerprint feature
45 Clenched hand
46 Salton and Sargasso
47 Part 5 of quote
49 McCarthy's attorney Roy
51 Hot sulfur springs of Spain
53 Window sill
56 Part 6 of quote
59 End of quote
61 Foray
62 The ones there
65 Weighty sound
66 To be, in Tours
67 Fix firmly
68 Go underground
69 Flanders river
70 Labors
71 Box for practice

DOWN
1 Goulash and ragout
2 Stone: pref.
3 AC generator
4 Started a garden
5 Biggers' detective
6 Roundup
7 DDE's command
8 Poetic contraction
9 First-year students at Annapolis
10 Census unit in Mexico City
11 Ken or Lena
12 Chimed
13 Baby foxes
21 Explorer Johnson
23 More inexperienced
26 Meals-on-wheels recipients
27 Altercations
29 Troy, NY sch.
31 Amity
32 Sicilian resort
33 Invites
34 Mown expanse
35 Back talk?
37 Toggle switch options
40 Angry gaze
41 Stock-market abbr.
44 Arrange anew
46 Sword cases
48 Sonnet finale
50 Corrida cry
52 Chart stand
54 Mild Dutch cheese
55 Terminator
56 Low card
57 Panamas and fedoras
58 Ireland, poetically
60 Cincinnati pros
63 Med. care plan
64 Oriental sash

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

B	E	D	S	■	A	L	T	O	■	L	U	M	P	S
A	L	A	I	■	D	O	O	R	■	E	B	O	A	T
S	P	I	N	■	A	G	R	A	■	T	E	R	S	E
K	A	N	G	A	R	O	O	C	O	U	R	T	S	■
E	S	T	E	S	■	■	■	L	I	P	■	I	W	O
T	O	Y	■	T	A	S	S	E	L	■	A	M	O	S
■	■	■	S	E	D	A	N	■	■	U	S	E	R	S
■	S	E	C	R	E	T	A	R	Y	B	I	R	D	■
T	O	P	O	S	■	■	P	I	M	A	S	■	■	■
S	U	I	T	■	I	C	E	M	A	N	■	P	G	A
E	L	S	■	S	R	O	■	■	■	G	A	L	A	S
■	M	O	N	K	E	Y	B	U	S	I	N	E	S	S
S	A	D	I	E	■	O	I	S	E	■	V	A	L	E
S	T	E	L	E	■	T	O	G	A	■	I	S	I	S
R	E	S	E	T	■	E	L	A	N	■	L	E	T	S

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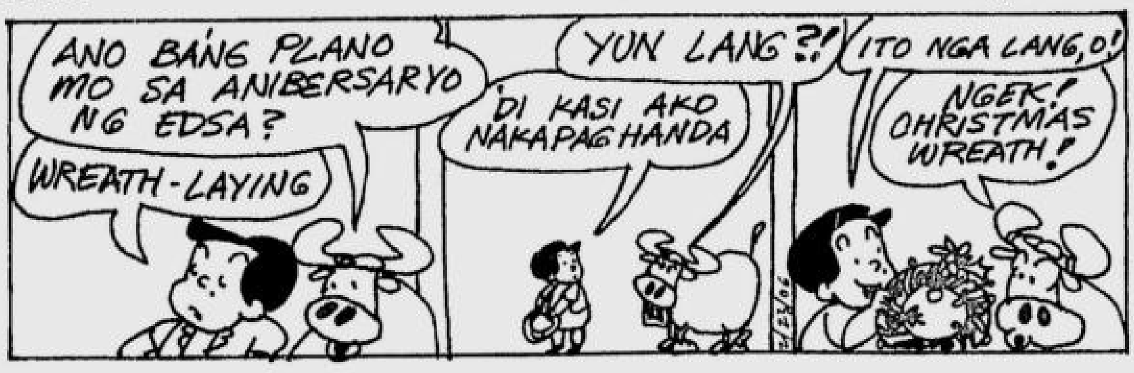
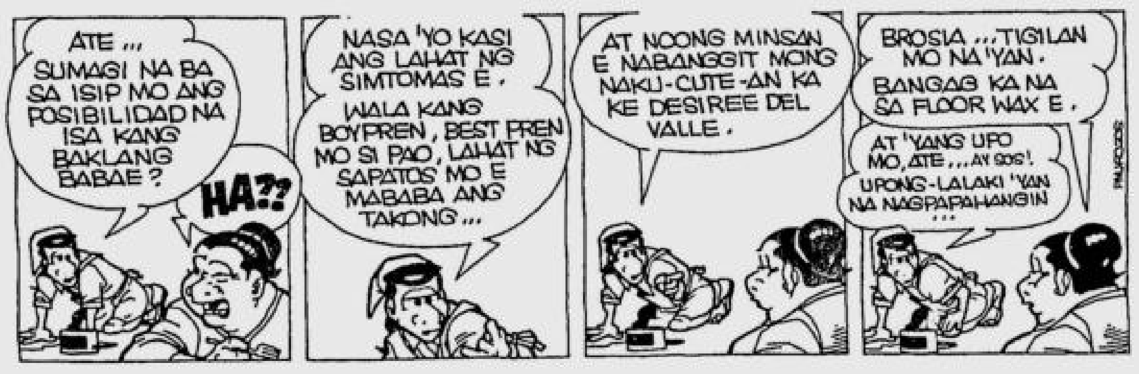
2/23/06

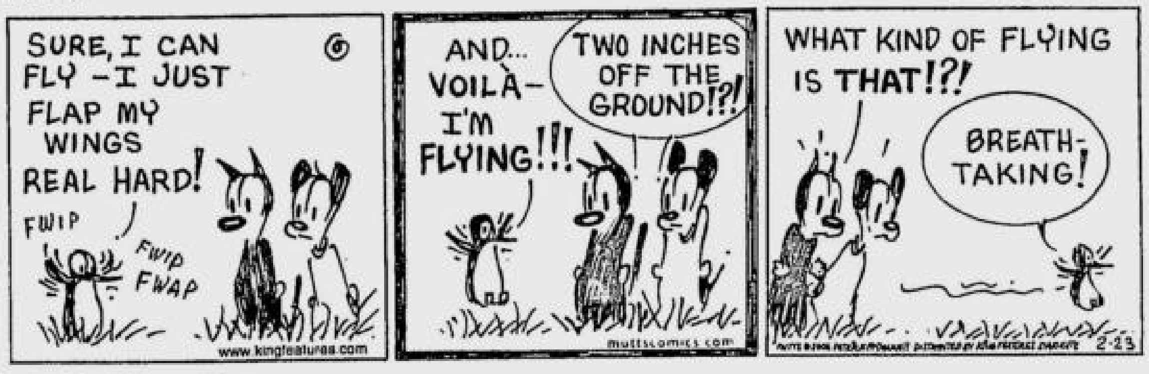
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


ANO BANG PLANO MO SA ANIBERSARYO NG EDSA?
WREATH-LAYING
YUN LANG?!
DI KASI AKO NAKAPAGHANDA
ITO NGA LANG, O!
NGEK! CHRISTMAS WREATH!

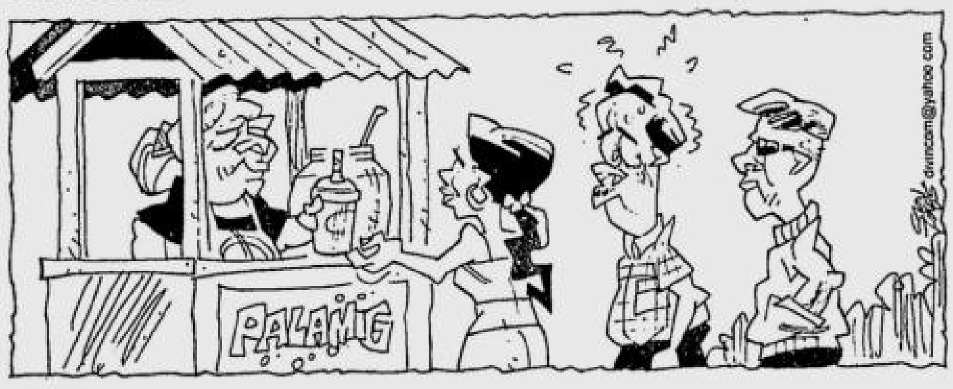
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


ATE ... SUMAGI NA BA SA ISIP MO ANG POSIBILIDAD NA ISA KANG BAKLANG BABAE?
HA??
NASA 'YO KASI ANG LAHAT NG SIMTOMAS E. WALA KANG BOYPREN, BEST PREN MO SI PAO, LAHAT NG SAPATOS MO E MABABA ANG TAKONG...
AT NOONG MINSAN E NABANGGIT MONG NAKU-CUTE-AN KA KE DESIREE DEL VALLE.
BROSIA ... TIGILAN MO NA 'YAN. BANGAG KA NA SA FLOOR WAX E.
AT 'YANG UPO MO, ATE ... AY SOS!
UPONG-LALAKI 'YAN NA NAGPAPAHANGIN ...

MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL

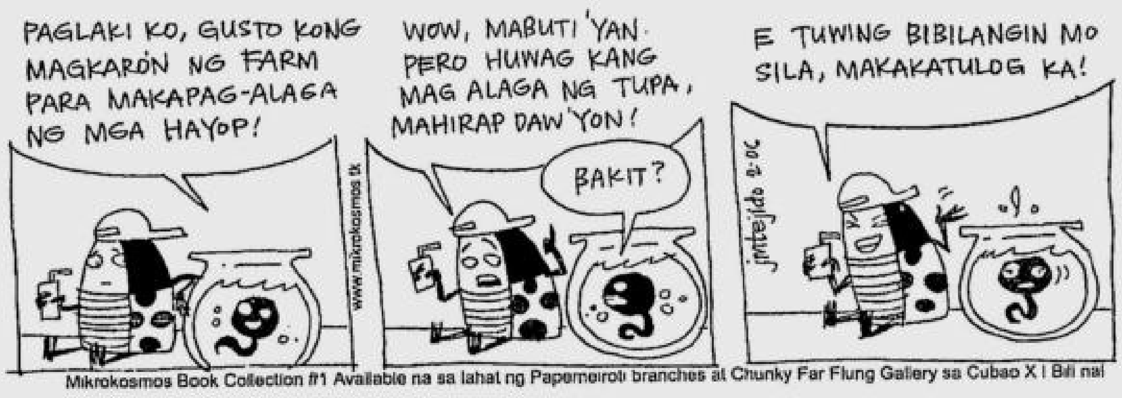

SURE, I CAN FLY - I JUST FLAP MY WINGS REAL HARD!
FWIP
FWIP
FWAP
www.kingfeatures.com
AND... VOILA - I'M FLYING!!!
TWO INCHES OFF THE GROUND!?!
mutts comics.com
WHAT KIND OF FLYING IS THAT!?!
BREATH-TAKING!
2-23

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS


PALAMIG
divincom@yahoo.com

THE STAMPEDE PARANOID

MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


PAGLAKI KO, GUSTO KONG MAGKARÓN NG FARM PARA MAKAPAG-ALAGA NG MGA HAYOP!
WOW, MABUTI 'YAN. PERO HUWAG KANG MAG ALAGA NG TUPA, MAHIRAP DAW 'YON!
BAKIT?
E TUWING BIBILANGIN MO SILA, MAKAKATULOG KA!
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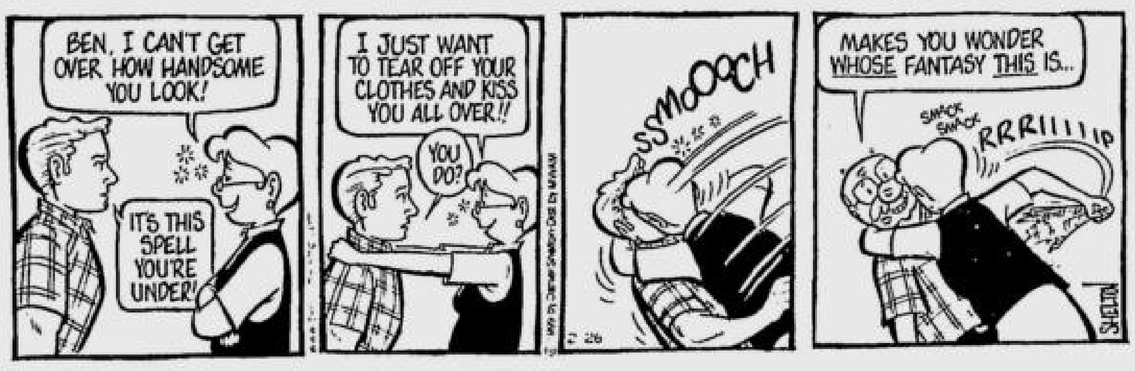
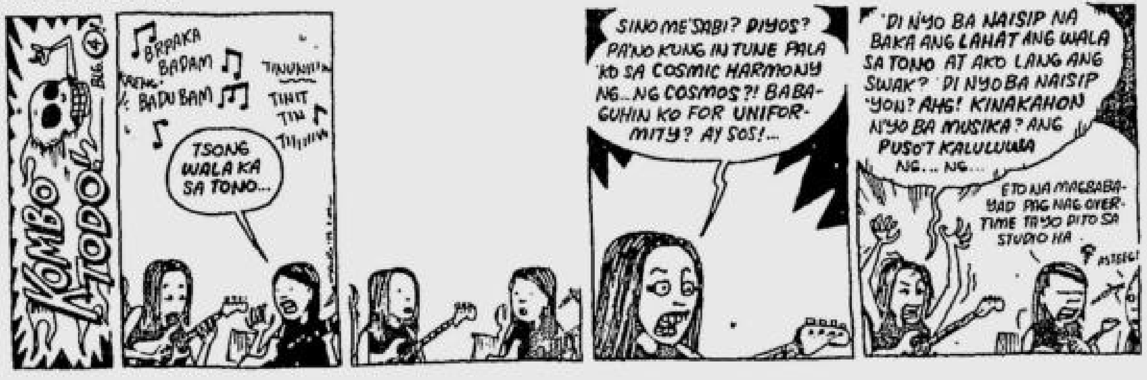
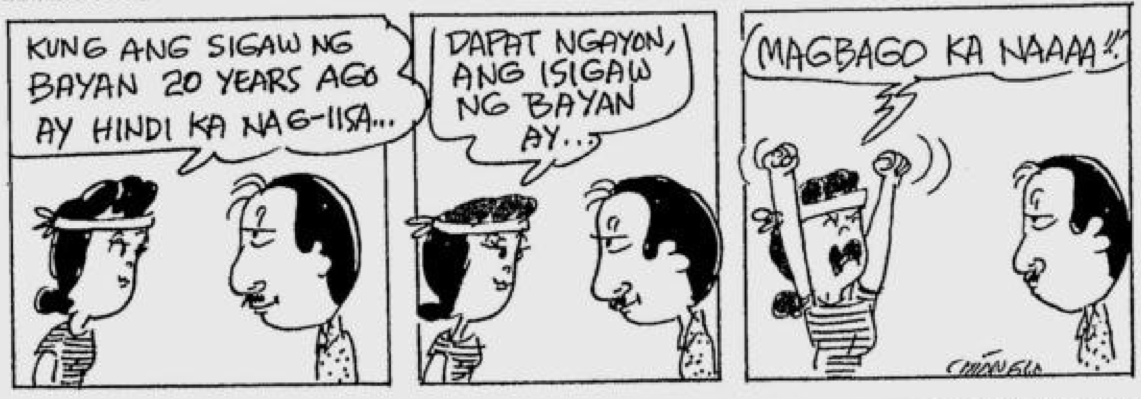

BEN, I CAN'T GET OVER HOW HANDSOME YOU LOOK!
IT'S THIS SPELL YOU'RE UNDER!
I JUST WANT TO TEAR OFF YOUR CLOTHES AND KISS YOU ALL OVER!!
YOU DO?
SSMOOOCH
MAKES YOU WONDER WHOSE FANTASY THIS IS...
SMACK SMACK
RRRIIIIIP
2-26
SHELTON

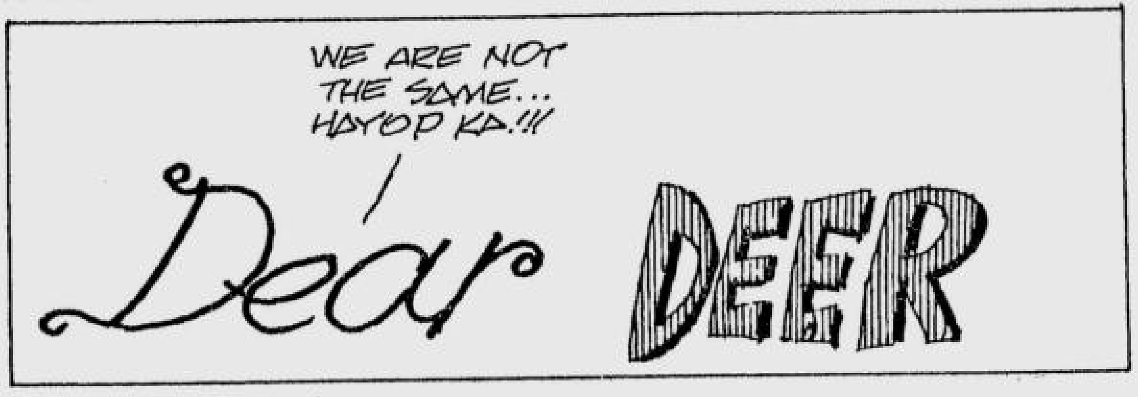
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


KOMBO TODO!
BIG 4
BRRAKA BADAM
KRENG
BADUBAM
TINUWIIN
TINIT TIN
TSONG WALA KA SA TONO...
SINO ME'SABI? DIYOS? PA'NO KUNG IN TUNE PALA KO SA COSMIC HARMONY NG... NG COSMOS?! BABAGUHIN KO FOR UNIFORMITY? AY SOS!...
'DI NYO BA NAISIP NA BAKA ANG LAHAT ANG WALA SA TONO AT AKO LANG ANG SWAK? 'DI NYO BA NAISIP 'YON? AHG! KINAKAHON N'YO BA MUSIKA? ANG PUSO'T KALULUWA NG... NG...
ETO NA MAGBABAYAD PAG NAG OVERTIME TAYO DITO SA STUDIO HA
ASTIG!

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


KUNG ANG SIGAW NG BAYAN 20 YEARS AGO AY HINDI KA NAG-IISA...
DAPAT NGAYON, ANG ISIGAW NG BAYAN AY...
MAGBAGO KA NAAAA!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING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MARY Elizabeth Winstead and Ryan Merriman in "Final Destination 3."

Humor saves horror sequel

Does Death really have all day to chase these narcissistic kids around?

REVIEW

NEW YORK—THE THIRD TIME USUALLY isn't the charm when it comes to movie franchises. Think "The Godfather: Part III," "Return of the Jedi," "Spy Kids" or "Halloween."

"Final Destination 3," however, is in some ways better than the original horror movie from 2000, if only because it has a sense of humor.

That doesn't mean there's anything new here. Director James Wong and Glen Morgan, with whom Wong cowrote the script, essentially returns to the structure of their first "Final Destination."

This time, a group of high school seniors survives a doomed roller coaster ride instead of a doomed plane trip by getting out ahead of time. Then they're similarly picked off, one-by-one, by the mind-bogglingly sadistic whim of Death.

(If there's one thing the series gets right, it's that teenagers can be self-centered and narcissistic enough to believe Death has all day to chase them around, planning their demise in elaborately clever ways. As if.)

Spectacle

The roller coaster crash, truly a spectacle, is also the best part of the movie—an intense chain reaction of wobbling wheels and splitting tracks, flying cars and students dangling upside-down, screaming in the night sky. Make sure you get to the theater on time.

The character Wendy foretells the accident and several classmates witness it happen exactly as she described. Astute girl that Wendy is—they didn't make her editor of the yearbook for nothing—she figures out that the kids are dying in the exact order in which they would have sat on the roller coaster.

Unlike the first film, which was painfully serious, the deaths here have a darkly funny sensibility about them. For example, two girls get it in a horrific tanning-salon disaster.

All of this should be viewed in a packed theater, not in a couch by yourself, bored on a Friday night. Not because it's so scary that you need to be around others to feel safe. On the contrary, the ridiculously complicated gross-out factor is best experienced with many others laughing just as hard as you are. *AP*

CHAMPS
EMI Philippines has signed Hilera, grand champion in Nescafe Soundskool's recently concluded intercollegiate band competition. The trio consists of (from left) bassist Ivan Garcia, drummer Bobby Padilla and vocalist Christ Padilla.

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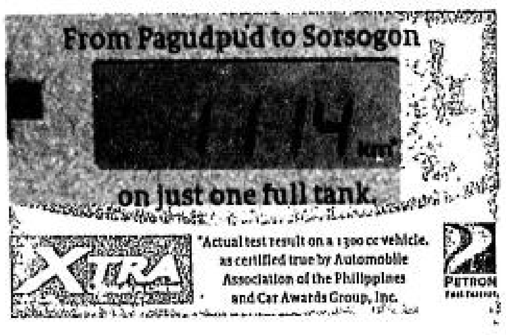
WHAT'S INSIDE

Fitch raises rating on 4 RP banks /B2

Megaworld out to raise fresh funds /B3


From Pagudpud to Sorsogon
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*Actual test result on a 1300 cc vehicle, as certified true by Automobile Association of the Philippines and Car Awards Group, Inc.
PETRON

RP seen getting credit-rating upgrade

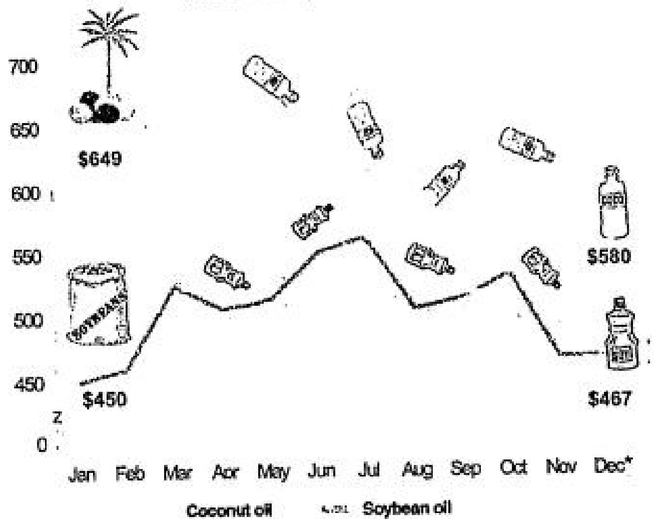
INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

Oil-out war: Coco costs more than soy*

COCONUT oil cost an average of 24 percent more than soybean oil worldwide from January to December 2005. Coconut oil was the Philippines' third top export in December 2005, earning P93.3 million.

Prices of coconut oil and soybean oil
in US dollars per metric ton



Sources: bsp.gov.ph, census.gov.ph and United Coconut Associations of the Philippines (UCAP)
*January-November prices from BSP, December prices from UCAP

Jamie Alarcon, PDI Research

British bank says fiscal condition improving

By Doris C. Dumlao

BRITISH BANK STANDARD CHARTERED SEES THE PHILIPPINES getting a sovereign credit-rating upgrade by year's end or in early 2007 once the government delivers on its revenue-collection commitment.

In an economic briefing Tuesday night, visiting Stanchart senior regional economist Mike Moran said the Philippines had put in place most of the fiscal remedial measures it needed last year and instead of imposing more taxes, collection efficiency must be shored up.

"When you have a leaking bucket, what you do before you use it is to plug the loopholes rather than pour more water into it," Moran said.

"When that happens, the virtuous cycle of stronger currency, global international debt financing and balanced budget will be a more realistic outlook," he said.

The Hong Kong-based economist said the Philippines was already carrying enough tax burden.

"I think the next focus in the reform objective is certainly improving the collection efficiency," he said.

Recently, two of the three most influential global rating agencies—Fitch and Standard & Poor's—had changed their outlook on Philippine sovereign debt from negative to stable, indicating that it is safe from a rating downgrade in the near term. Moody's, on the other hand, has kept its negative rating.

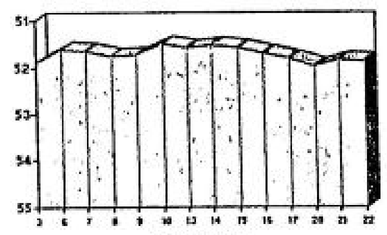
All these rating agencies still rate Philippine debt as below investment grade.

With the repeal of certain value-added tax exemptions and the increase in the VAT rate from 10 to 12 percent, the government was seen to have finally stabilized its fiscal condition.

RP SEEN/ B3

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



FEBRUARY

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P51.875 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Feb. 23, 2006

¥118.64 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Feb. 23, 2006

GOLD: $551.70-552.20

per ounce Hong Kong, Feb. 22, 2006

STOCK MARKET

Stocks down slightly

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.43-percent lower yesterday as domestic security concerns, rising crude oil prices and a weaker Wall Street drove investors out of the local market, dealers said.

They said rumors of a plot against the government continue to circulate, and dealers expect the political noise to intensify as the country marks the 20th anniversary of the bloodless revolt that toppled Ferdinand Marcos.

The composite index dropped 8.93 points to 2,067.88, after trading between 2,060.78 and 2,076.81. Turnover was 436.69 million shares worth P1.21 billion.

However, gainers outnumbered losers 44 to 36, while 54 stocks were unchanged.

The all-shares index fell 0.35 point to 996.44.

"Everybody seems to have taken a cautious stance. Lingering political and security concerns have cooled down the market," said Jonathan Ravelas of Banco de Oro. *AFP*

PUSHES CHARTER EXTENSION

Pagcor sees $3B in 'gaming' investments

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

STATE-LED PHILIPPINE AMUSEMENT and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) expects at least $3 billion (P200 billion) in new gaming investments to come in this year should Congress extend its 25-year franchise to operate gaming ventures.

Pagcor's mandate allows it to regulate all games of chance sanctioned by the law. The fate of Pagcor's charter, which will expire in 2008, now lies in the hands of the Senate after the House of Representatives agreed to extend it for another 25 years.

Pagcor Chair Efraim Genuino said four foreign investors have expressed interest in developing a mixed casino and entertainment complex on the Public Estates Authority's 65-hectare reclaimed land along Roxas Boulevard.

Genuino spoke before reporters during the Asia's Gaming and Entertainment Leisure Expo at the World Trade Center yesterday.

In 2003, the Department of Finance considered allowing PEA and Pagcor to jointly transform the property into an entertainment complex. The market value of the PEA property then was estimated at P12-P18 billion.

Genuino also said that two investors were interested in building a similar entertainment leisure complex in Clark, but specific details were not immediately available.

"If the (Pagcor) charter is approved within the year, we are sure of no less than $3 billion in investments, in the form of development of leisure park, entertainment complex and tourism infrastructure," Genuino said.

He said that among the interested investors, an American group was looking at the Roxas property while a European investor was willing to plunk in a billion euros into the Clark gaming project. He declined to identify these investors.

Pagcor generated P24 billion in gaming revenues last year and expects this to grow to P25 billion this year.

PAGCOR/ B3

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Fitch raises rating on 4 RP banks

By Doris C. Dumlao

LONDON-BASED FITCH RATINGS has raised its outlook on four Philippine banks to "stable" from "negative" in line with its recent upgrade on the outlook for sovereign credit.

In a statement from Singapore, Fitch said it had affirmed its ratings on the long-term foreign currency ratings of Security Bank (BB), Equitable PCI Bank (BB), Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co. (BB-) and Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. (BB-).

Also affirmed were Security Bank and Equitable PCI Bank's short-term foreign currency of 'B'; long-term local currency of 'BB' and individual rating of 'D.'

Metrobank's short-term foreign currency rating was kept at 'B' and individual rating at 'D/E' while RCBC retained a long-term local currency debt rating of 'BB-' (BB minus) and individual rating of 'D/E.'

Of the three major global rating agencies, Fitch has to date the most optimistic rating on Philippine risk at two notches below investment grade (BB on foreign currency debt) versus Standard & Poor's three notches below and Moody's Investor Service's four notches below investment grade.

All these three credit rating agencies gave the country a "negative" outlook—a precursor to a possible ratings downgrade—in July last year after the Supreme Court suspended the VAT law.

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Vivienne Tan
Founder

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National Anthem: Champagne Morales • **Invocation:** Gary Valenciano • **Welcome Address:** Hon. Jose Concepcion III • GO NEGOSYO Music Video • Launching of GEN-E Presidential Scholarships • PCE-DepEd Best High School Entrepreneurship Program • PCE-CHED State University / College Entrepreneurship Award • Doña Consuelo "Chito" Madrigal Collantes Award for Outstanding Entrepreneurship Students • Doña Consuelo "Chito" Madrigal Collantes Award for Outstanding Entrepreneurship Teacher • Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship Award for Big Brother of Filipino Entrepreneurs • **FORUM 1:** Building National Confidence and Optimism To Inspire More Successful Filipino Entrepreneurs - **Moderators:** Rico Hizon • Anna Marie Periquet - **Panelists:** Hon. Jose Concepcion III • Socorro Ramos • Dr. Rolando Hortaleza • Atty. Felipe Gozon • Vivienne Tan • Henry Lim Bon Liong • Rodrigo Rivera • Dennis Valdes • Grace Glory Go • **Special Number:** Martin Nievera • **Entertainment:** Makatang Nonoy (Ony Carcamo, Ventriloquist) • **FORUM 2:** A Global Market Beckons The Filipino Entrepreneur - **Moderators:** Rico Hizon • Anna Marie Periquet - **Panelists:** • Howard Belton • Dr. Paco Sandejas • Guillermo Luchangco • Ben Colayco • **FORUM 3:** Uncommon Heroes for the Common Good - **Moderators:** David Celdran • Karen Davila - **Panelists:** Dr. Justin Arboleda • Francisco Colayco • Ray Gapuz Jr. • Dylan Wilk • Rina Lopez-Bautista • Rico Rey Geronimo • Cecilio Pedro • **TALK:** Breeding The Entrepreneurial Mindset and Culture - By Raju Mandhyan • **FORUM 4:** New Approaches in Entrepreneurship Education - **Moderators:** David Celdran • Ces Oreña Drilon - **Panelists:** • Prof. Joel Santos • Prof. Andy Ferreria • Prof. Danny Cabulay • Genevieve Ledesma-Tan • Prof. Arnel Uy • Prof. Patrick Chan • Dennis Posadas • Armando Miclat, Jr. • **CULMINATING FORUM:** Triggering the Age of Entrepreneurship in the Philippines - **Moderator:** Korina Sanchez - **Panelists:** • Sec. Arthur Yap • Sec. Estrella Alabastro • OIC/Sec. Fe Hidalgo • Usec. Zorayda Amelia Alonzo • Exec. Dir. Gondelina Amata • Gov. Luis Raymund F. Villafuerte • Aurelio Parisotto • Menardo Jimenez Jr. • Johnlu Koa • Prof. Josephine Aguilar

DAY 2 (February 24, 2006/ 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.)
Opening Ceremonies • Host: Johnny Litton • Tessa Prieto-Valdes • Cutting of Ribbon • Sen.Manuel Villar • Sen. Manuel Roxas II • Sen. Francis Pangilinan • Cong.Wilhelmino Alvarado • Mayor Rosendo Capco • Mayor Freddie Tinga • Aurelio Montinola III • Government Officials • Partner Organizations • Lucy Torres-Gomez • Viewing of Exhibit • Opening Program • Feng Shui Master Charlie Chao's Business Outlook for 2006 • DZMM RADYO NEGOSYO sa Market! Market! with Carl Balita & Anna Marie Periquet • "Elevator Pitch" Exhibition by Business Plan Contest Winners & Runners-up • Awarding of PCE-ENEDA Cup Winners • MOA Signing - SERDEF and the Philippine Internet Commerce Society • Safeguarding and Optimizing Your Intellectual Capital - By: Intellectual Property Office • GO NEGOSYO Concert with Orange and Lemons & Up Dharma Down Band at the Central Plaza, Market! Market! • Seminar Room 1 - International Workshop on Technopreneurship By: Prof. Patrick Chan - Host: DOST • Seminar Room 2 - Easy Tips on How to Start a Retail Business and How to Supply to Retailers By: Steven T. Cua • Easy on the pocket Business Ideas By: Food Cart Association of the Philippines

DAY 3 (February 25, 2006/ 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.)
The Franchise Boom: Now is the Time to Get Started - By: Association of Filipino Franchisers Inc. • The Entrepreneur: Know Thyself - By: Lex Ledesma • **Talk:** Jeff Van Ruyven • Finding Your Opportunity of a Lifetime: Where do Entrepreneurs Get Their Ideas - By: Jay Bernardo • Moving Innovations to Market - By: Maoi Arroyo • The Essentials of a Successful Business Start-up - By: Joel Santos • **FORUM:** Financing Programs that Work - **Moderator:** Mau Bolante - **Panelists:** National Livelihood Support Fund, Personal Bank Loan Providers, ABS-CBN Bayan Microfinance Foundation, Pawnshops, Cooperatives • Seminar Room 1 - International Workshop on Technopreneurship By: Prof. Patrick Chan, Host: DOST • Seminar Room 2 - Franchise Your Businesss: An Option for Growth - By: Philippine Franchise Association • Demystifying the Stock Market - By: Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE)

**final list of speakers for confirmation*

MENTORING SESSIONS (February 24-25, 2006)
February 24 - Mentoring Sessions
Robert Trota • Yvette Pardo Orbeta • Butz Bartolome • Johnlu Koa • Maria Ester Bautista • Les Reyes • John Tiong • Mackie de Leon • Jean Henri Lhuillier • Marcelino Chua • Carissa Cruz • Resh Mirpuri • Joey Sunico • Edward Lim • Henry Lim Bon Liong • Joji Bian • Delby Bragais • Vince Padilla • Rommel Juan • Joey Singian • Tess Ngan Tian • Ben Colayco • Carl Balita • JC Leviste • Chit Juan • Antonio Abad • Luis Pellicer • Honor Dimapilis • Cary Go • Jimmyton Araneta • Jose Che Soler • Marisa Andal • Grace Tiongco

February 25 - Mentoring sessions
Zorayda Amelia Alonzo • Bong Abad • Champ Reyes • Leo Riingen • Butz Bartolome • Les Reyes • Luis Pellicer • Bernardo Jorge Mitra • Greg Banzon • Edwin Moran • Bing Limjoco • Marivel Carandang • Rommel Juan • Ramcy Sanvictores • Richie Cuna • Ray Gapuz • JC Leviste • Chit Juan • Tess Ngan Tian • Victor Tan • Rolando Hortaleza • Jo Magsaysay • Richard Tiu

** Joey Concepcion and Anna Marie Periquet will join various time slots*

Call 637-9347 or 631-8101
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By hook or by croak

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

HENRY SY, ACCORDING to his children, still makes each and every big decision on all the deals of the SM group.

His big deal of the moment is the takeover of Equitable PCI Bank. It so happens that the SSS and the GSIS own more shares in the bank than Henry Sy's company.

The pension funds sank in the bank some P20 billion, taken from the hard earned contributions of millions of working class, clueless members.

From the looks of it, nevertheless, Henry Sy has made up his mind to take full control of the country's third biggest bank—by hook or by crook, via gratis et amore.

* * *

DOING Henry Sy's dirty job for this croc-style takeover, of course, is daughter Tessie Sy. After all, Fortune magazine named her among the world's 50 most powerful women.

Our sources insist that Tessie Sy employs two "godfathers" for her group's desire to gobble up this bank, which has about P300 billion in resources.

It seems the "godfathers" have been using their Malacañang connection to force the takeover upon the pension funds, particularly the SSS.

One of the "godfathers" is a former Cabinet member of the late former President Diosdado Macapagal. You know—the father of Gloriaetta!

This one is the same guy that ordered a rush job for the SSS to sell its EPCIB shares to the SM group a few years ago.

Our hero ordered the SSS to hold a meeting—at MIDNIGHT, okay! That kind of rush job! No wonder, he continues to be linked to this SM mega-deal of Henry Sy.

* * *

NOW the other "godfather," according to our sources, is related by blood to Gloriaetta. He is known in the business community as, er, "active" in the finance sector.

Tapped by Tessie Sy for the takeover seems to be the SSS boss, the well-travelled Cora dela Paz, having gone in and out of the country on SSS expense.

Dela Paz has been mouthing nothing but the SM group's line on the takeover from the start. And nobody above her has even questioned her.

Directly in charge of the SSS is the Department of Finance. Thus, word in business circles put Finance Secretary Gary Teves as the "lord protector" of Dela Paz.

Our sources revealed that Dela Paz has been getting, er, "verbal" instructions from Teves concerning the takeover scandal.

But the most interesting part of our story concerns the total silence of Malacañang. Is it deafening or what?

Here is the SSS boss, selling us (SSS members) down the river, and Gloriaetta is not saying anything about it, much less doing anything about it.

The usually talkative Palace boys are not croaking on this politically explosive issue, even if Henry Sy and his SM group are forcing the takeover.

In another places and time, you see, it could be construed as plain and simple collusion!

* * *

ASIDE from Malacañang, the Bangko Sentral seems to have bitten its tongue, and then closed its eyes, on the EPCIB takeover.

There is a clear conflict of interest, with the Sy family also owning Banco de Oro and China Bank, while Tessie Sy and her nominees to the EPCIB board heading powerful committees in the bank.

Look, the Sy family's SM group launched a hostile takeover of the bank, right? They failed, right? And they are still in charge of the bank, right?

And the Bangko Sentral, the policeman of the banking system, just stands idly by, is that it?

Several months ago, the Bangko Sentral already ordered EPCIB to settle the issue on the 10-percent "treasury shares."

To this day, the order is still being disregarded. It does not help that new boss of the Bangko Sentral was also handpicked by Gloriaetta.

* * *

THOSE "treasury shares" have hounded EPCIB. They were part of the investments of the Go family in the bank.

BREAKTIME/ B3

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of February 22, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	35	35	34	34	238,900
Bank of the Phil. Islands	59	59	58.5	58.5	10,924,400
China Banking Corp.	625	645	625	645	5,430
Citystate Savings Bank	19	19	19	19	300
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	64	64.5	63.5	64.5	188,800
International Exch. Bank	22.75	23.25	22.75	23.25	42,200
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	32.5	33	32.5	33	576,900
Philippine National Bank	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	5,000
Phil. Savings Bank	35	35	35	35	12,500
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	13	13	13	13	600
Security Bank Corp.	39	39	38.5	39	105,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	33.5	33.5	33.5	33.5	19,900
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Bankard Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	40,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	3230	3230	3225	3225	210
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	146	147	146	147	900
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2180	2180	2180	2180	210
Ivantage Corp.	0.76	0.77	0.76	0.77	2,530,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	45	45.5	45	45.5	351,800
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	41.5	41.5	40.5	41	396,700
Manila Electric Co. A	12.75	13	12.75	13	17,900
Manila Electric Co. B	19	19	18.75	18.75	469,700
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.3	2,579,000
Petron Corp.	4.55	4.6	4.55	4.6	1,033,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.65	3.65	3.65	3.65	15,000
CADP Group Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	2,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	3	3	3	3	4,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	20.25	20.25	20.25	20.25	5,100
Jollibee Foods Corp.	34	34	33.5	33.5	197,800
RFM Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	70,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1.74	1.74	1.72	1.72	108,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	100,000
San Miguel Corp. A	60.5	60.5	60	60	81,500
San Miguel Corp. B	81	81	79.5	79.5	94,000
Universal Robina Corp	17.75	18	17.5	18	1,227,200
Vitarich Corp.	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.29	1,330,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.3	0.32	0.3	0.32	2,510,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.3	1.3	3,435,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.1	4.2	4.05	4.2	962,000
CHEMICALS					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	2.38	2.55	2.38	2.55	90,000
Interphil Labs Inc. A	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	50,000
Interphil Labs Inc. B	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82	50,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Global Equities Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	1,000,000
Panasonic Mfg Phil Corp.	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	5,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.25	860,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.008	0.0085	0.008	0.0085	10,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.009	0.0095	0.0085	0.0095	66,000,000
Ayala Corp.	330	330	327.5	330	41,880
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.8	4.85	4.8	4.85	329,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.024	0.025	0.024	0.024	22,100,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.34	2.34	2.34	2.34	100,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.88	0.95	0.88	0.93	6,270,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.64	1.64	1.64	1.64	44,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.96	0.97	0.95	0.96	3,920,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3	3	3	3	348,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	50,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.58	1.7	1.58	1.68	1,246,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.9	34,000
Medco Holdings	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.28	2,700,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.23	0.23	0.22	0.22	550,000
Pacifica	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	7,500,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.23	0.23	720,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc	1.06	1.06	1.02	1.06	100,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	1,000,000
SM Investments Corp.	214	216	214	215	209,590
South China Resources Inc	0.74	0.77	0.74	0.74	370,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	1,300,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	860,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	10.75	10.75	10.25	10.5	3,711,400
Belle Corp.	0.97	0.97	0.95	0.96	3,300,000
A Brown Co. Inc.	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	710,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.235	0.235	1,690,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	1.58	1.6	1.56	1.6	3,631,000
C&P Homes Inc.	1.68	1.68	1.68	1.68	30,000
Cebu Prop. Vent. A	0.76	0.76	0.76	0.76	70,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.22	0.22	0.215	0.215	250,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc	0.26	0.3	0.26	0.3	6,300,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.44	0.45	0.44	0.45	2,650,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.025	0.025	0.024	0.024	2,100,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	400,000
Filinvest Land, Inc.	1.24	1.24	1.18	1.2	2,980,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.205	0.21	0.205	0.21	900,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.42	1.42	1.36	1.38	5,311,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	3,170,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.215	0.245	0.215	0.24	4,710,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	1,190,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.18	0.185	0.18	0.185	590,000
SM Development Corp.	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	152,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.9	7.9	7.9	7.9	562,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.13	0.135	0.13	0.13	230,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	11.25	11.5	11.25	11.5	43,800
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc	0.88	0.89	0.88	0.89	400,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	825	830	820	825	38,170
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	577,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1755	1755	1745	1745	38,720
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.16	0.165	0.16	0.165	1,600,000
Imperial Res.	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	3,000,000
Ionics Inc.	1.26	1.26	1.24	1.24	57,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	4,600,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.3	1.34	1.3	1.3	105,000
Philweb Corp.	0.026	0.026	0.024	0.025	78,200,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	50,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.66	1.66	1.66	1.66	33,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	11.25	11.75	11.25	11.75	641,600
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc	0.77	0.77	0.77	0.77	30,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	15,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.78	1.78	1.72	1.74	4,283,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.3	710,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	1,330,000
EDUCATION					
Centro Escolar University	8.6	8.6	8.6	8.6	19,000
Ipeople Inc	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	46,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Paxys Inc.	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	610,000
Philcomsat Holdings Corp.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	10,000
MINING & OIL					
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	1.06	1.06	1	1	193,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc B	1.26	1.26	1.2	1.2	367,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	6.2	6.8	6.2	6.8	7,801,000
Benguet Corp. B	29	29	29	29	100
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215	3,110,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.26	4,230,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	26,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	100,000
Omico Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	34,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	1.66	1.7	1.64	1.68	15,853,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.74	1.84	1.74	1.84	19,283,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	27	27	26.5	27	89,100
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.28	940,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.34	0.35	0.34	0.35	1,140,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.25	0.26	0.235	0.235	5,550,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0075	0.0075	0.007	0.007	13,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.008	0.0085	0.008	0.0085	5,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.47	0.49	0.47	0.47	560,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.52	0.52	0.51	0.51	170,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	10,000
PREFERRED					
PLDT (10% Pref) Series O	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	200
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(Pdr)	11.25	11.75	11	11.75	757,400

CURRENCIES

February 22, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.839419	1.000000	51.9590
Japan	Yen	0.007072	0.008425	0.4378
United Kingdom	Pound	1.465626	1.746000	90.7204
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.108154	0.128844	6.6946
Switzerland	Franc	0.641611	0.764351	39.7149
Canada	Dollar	0.732094	0.872144	45.3157
Singapore	Dollar	0.515171	0.613723	31.8884
Australia	Dollar	0.620092	0.738716	38.3829
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.227462	2.653576	137.8772
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.223845	0.266667	13.8558
Brunei	Dollar	0.513594	0.611845	31.7909
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000091	0.000108	0.0056
Thailand	Baht	0.021359	0.025445	1.3221
UAE	Dirham	0.228544	0.272264	14.1466
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.191300	61.8988
Argentina	Peso	0.273694	0.326052	16.9413
Brazil	Real	0.395207	0.470810	24.4628
Denmark	Kroner	0.133998	0.159632	8.2943
India	Rupee	0.018923	0.022543	1.1713
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.225772	0.268962	13.9750
Mexico	New Peso	0.080123	0.095451	4.9595
New Zealand	Dollar	0.555429	0.661682	34.3803
South Africa	Rand	0.138977	0.165563	8.6025
Korea	Won	0.000867	0.001033	0.0537
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025879	0.030830	1.6019

Megaworld out to raise fresh funds

Firm approves offer of up to 3.5 billion shares of common stock

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

PROPERTY DEVELOPER MEGAworld Corp. will be raising fresh funds by offering up to 3.5 billion new common shares to international investors.

"The purpose of the international offering is to expand the company's shareholder base [to include] institutional investors," Megaworld said in its disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) yesterday. "Proceeds of the offer will be used to finance existing and new projects."

The final size of the offer has yet to be announced.

At Megaworld's closing price of P1.38 yesterday, the additional offer of 3.5 billion shares is pegged at roughly P4.8 billion, according to estimates.

Megaworld's proposed offer trails that of another Gokongwei firm, Universal Robina Corp., which raised some P12 billion from a recent offer of additional shares to foreign investors.

Megaworld earlier said it was setting aside P7 billion over the next three to four years for the first phase of its 25-hectare hotel and residential project at the Villamor Air Base in Pasay City.

The project, dubbed Newport City, involves the construction of a 350-room Marriott hotel, and the development of residential and commercial areas, as well as a sports complex. It is expected to be completed in 2008.

Megaworld said it has tapped Hirsch Bedner Associates to design the hotel's interiors, including the grand lobby.

Funding for the initial phase will come largely from the company's cash pile and the pre-selling of units.

The first residential cluster to be built in Newport City will occupy a 3.2-hectare lot.

Megaworld will develop the property that belongs to the Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA).

Newport City is the developer's second largest development project next to its 50-hectare residential McKinley Hill project in Fort Bonifacio Global City.

Also, Megaworld and Araneta Center Inc. have joined hands in undertaking the P15-billion residential project that would be linked to the MRT-3 and LRT-2 mass transit systems in Cubao, Quezon City.

Under the joint venture agreement, Megaworld will build 6,000 residential units contained in 17 buildings that will be located on a 4.2-hectare property within the Araneta Center.

DHL ups stake as RP's top logistics company

By Daxim L. Lucas

DHL EXPRESS PHILIPPINES INcreased its share of the local air parcel service market, reinforcing its position as the top package delivery firm in the country.

In a media briefing on Wednesday, DHL Express country manager Larry Llamzon said his firm managed to corner 40 percent of the air parcel delivery business in the first half of 2005, according to the firm's own estimate.

"This makes us number one," Llamzon said.

The company's latest market share figure is an improvement over the 37 percent recorded in the whole of 2004, he added.

When expanded to include local air parcel delivery firms, the market share of the delivery and logistics giant stands at 35 percent of the market.

This still makes them the leader, he stressed, even if the market for air parcel services is becoming congested, to the point where market share can change rapidly.

"It's very competitive," Llamzon said. "It could turn on a dime."

The entire air express industry in the country is estimated to be worth about $70 million annually, according to a company study conducted two years ago. Including the freight forwarding business, the industry is estimated to be worth up to $90 million annually.

Because the air parcel delivery business is becoming increasingly competitive—and the service is increasingly being treated as a commodity, with various players offering the same price and quality—Llamzon said DHL would bank on its strengths to differentiate itself from its competitors.

"It's true that there are so many players offering the same services," he said. "Transit times are the same, and pricing is the same. So we will focus on customer service and innovation at our service points."

Breaktime . . .

From page B2

In 1998, the Go family was supposed to match the investments of the SSS and the GSIS in buying the old PCI Bank—to the tune of P16 billion. For its investment, the Go family simply used the money of the same bank.

Guess what—our Ms Travel Girl, the one and only Dela Paz, was supposed to dig into that P16-billion missing capital of the bank.

The audit by Dela Paz is now already going on its 8th month, without any result whatsoever.

That P16 billion should be making money for the bank. It should be in the bank but it is not! Now where is it? Dela Paz should be telling us. But she is not!

Does the Sy family, by stepping into the shoes of the Go family as part owners of the bank, have any liability on those missing P16 billion?

That should make an interesting topic in the audit report of Dela Paz.

RP seen getting . . .

From page B1

But Moran said overall investment behavior in the Philippines was still prone to local political developments, which remained an overhang.

He said he did not expect the peso to further appreciate past the 51 level against the greenback this year, saying the currency would likely stabilize between 51.50 and 52 alongside regional trends.

The economist projected the peso to trade at 51.50 to a dollar by the end of the first quarter, 51.70 by the second quarter, 51.90 by the third and 52 by the fourth quarter.

After sliding to the 52 level on political jitters triggered by an explosion in Malacañang, the peso yesterday weakened to 51.875 from Tuesday's closing of 51.83.

Moran also said inflation remained a key risk for the country with global oil prices likely stabilizing at a high level of $60 a barrel. Inflation for the year was seen to average at 7.5 percent this year from 7.7 percent last year, before easing to 5 percent in 2007 and 5.5 percent in 2008.

Pagcor sees . . .

From page B1

A Las Vegas-based consultancy firm sees casino revenues in Asia expanding by 20 percent to $13 billion in 2006, fueled by the growth of Macau's gaming industry.

Globalysis said it was upbeat on the casino business in Asia, echoing the optimism of several governments within the region that are relaxing their policies on gaming to lure more tourists and investments, the China Daily reported.

Macau's gaming industry generated gross revenues of roughly $5.57 billion last year, an increase of 11.2 percent from 2004.

Globalysis said that US casino firms would look beyond Macau to South Korea and other markets in the Asian region. Macau's success and Singapore's high-profile casino resorts are expected to trigger other Asian governments to legalize casinos.

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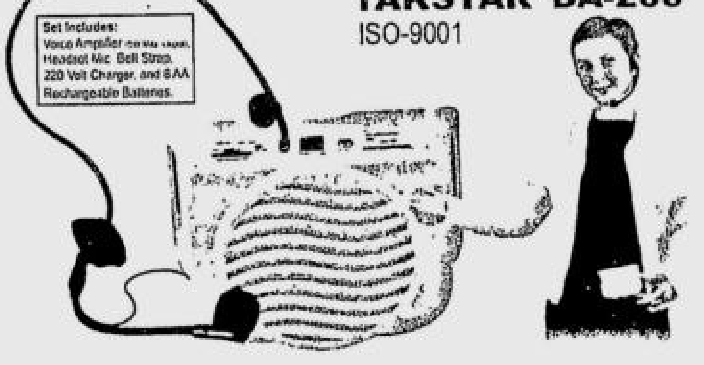

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Mindanao ICT to go full blast in 2006

(First of two parts)

MINDANAWORLD

Joji Ilagan-Bian

EXPECT THE INFORMATION AND communications technology sector in Mindanao to go full steam ahead this year.

The region's vision to be among the world's best was evident during the 4th Mindanao ICT Congress, where various key players from the six regions gathered to address the need for innovation in the ICT industry.

The congress focused on enhancing the distribution of knowledge and information so that Mindanao can carve its niche in the 21st century.

Held in General Santos City last year, the successful gathering resulted in the passing of seven policy resolutions.

One of the resolutions calls for both the public and private sectors to intensify the promotion of investments in the ICT sector in Mindanao.

This cooperation is critical, particularly in convincing investors that Mindanao is peaceful, orderly and above else, ICT-ready.

To support this marketing initiative, a resolution urging the Telecommunications Office (TELOF) to fast-track the establishment of 37 identified community e-centers (CeCs) and 42 e-LGU CeCs in Mindanao was presented.

It specified the expansion of rural connectivity in the Mindanao regions, specifically in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

The stakeholders also urged concerned government agencies to develop the IT skills of Mindanao's human capital and businesses.

In this campaign, it was suggested that the Department of Education (DepEd) include effective computer applications in the curriculum of primary and secondary schools.

Likewise, the Commission on Higher Education (CHEd) and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) were tasked to monitor IT schools and business process outsource companies to make sure that graduates possess the skills acceptable to the ICT industry.

Mindanao is targeting contact centers, business process outsourcing firms, animation houses, software development and medical transcription companies.

Each sector demands different knowledge and skills.

Therefore, more education and training programs are needed to address each sector's special labor requirements.

Open Source technologies gained a considerable following at the second half of 2005, when authorities allegedly raided offices and Internet shops for copyright violations.

As such, the private sector urged government agencies to mount an aggressive and widespread information drive to inform all ICT stakeholders about the nature and benefits of adopting Open Source technology for business operations.

This is, in fact, a very attractive alternative for small businesses who could not afford the legal rights to use commercial systems, but could not afford to do without a computer.

Open Source is not only free, it's also a viable option for those firms with a tight budget.

(Joji Ilagan Bian is a strong advocate for Mindanao; chair, Mindanaworld Foundation Inc; Con-Com and Charter Change Advocacy Commission member; vice chair of the Mindanao Commission of Women and National Corn Board; chair of the Mindanao TVET; Mindanao rep., Export Development Council; chair, Joji Ilagan Foundation; former chair of the Mindanao Business Council. E-mail comments to jojibian2@yahoo.com)

MAYNILAD WATER SERVICES, INC.
Basement MWSI Bldg., MWSS Complex
Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City, Philippines 1100
Tel. Nos. 435-3366, 920-5521 loc. 3600, 3615, 3616

INVITATION TO BID

Maynilad Water Services, Inc. is inviting all interested Suppliers to pre-qualify and participate in the scheduled e-Bid for the supply and delivery of the following item:

Quantity	Description
1,205 Drums	CALCIUM HYPOCHLORITE, Ca (Ocl)2 (AWWA B-300-92)
As per MWSI Technical Specifications & Bid Terms & Condition	

Interested bidders may, beginning February 27, 2006 until March 3, 2006 and **upon payment of the non-refundable participating fee of Two Thousand Pesos Only (P2,000.00)**, obtain further information and secure a complete set of pre-qualification forms and bid terms and condition (bid documents) from Purchasing Department, Basement, MWSI Building, MWSS Compound, Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City.Telephone Nos. 435-3366/435-3374; Fax No. 928-2303. Payment may be in the form of Cash or Manager's Check addressed to Maynilad Water Services, Inc.

MWSI reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive and all informalities therein and accept the bid it deems most advantageous to the company.

(Sgd.) **LUIS M. Z. LERMA**
Manager, Purchasing Dept.

(PDI - Feb. 23 & 24, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Intramuros, Manila

IN THE MATTER OF AMENDING SECTION 5, RULE 30 OF THE 1993 COMELEC RULES OF PROCEDURE
x------------------------x

Chairman	Benjamin S. Abalos, Sr.
Commissioner	Resurreccion Z. Borra
Commissioner	Florentino A. Tuason, Jr.
Commissioner	Romeo A. Brawner

Promulgated:
20 February 2006

RESOLUTION NO. 7630

WHEREAS, Section 5, Rule 30 of the 1993 Comelec Rules of Procedure provides:

> *"Sec. 5. Preliminary Injunction Not Granted Without Notice; Issuance of Restraining Order. No preliminary injunction shall be granted without notice to the adverse party. If it shall appear from the facts shown by affidavits or the verified petition that great or irreparable injury would result to the applicant before the matter can be heard on notice, the Commission or any Division to which the application for preliminary injunction was made, may issue a restraining order to be effective only for a period of twenty (20) days from date of issuance. Within the said twenty-day period, the Commission or the Division as the case may be, must cause an order to be served on the respondent requiring him to show cause, at a specified time and place, why the injunction should not be granted, and determine within the same period whether or not the preliminary shall be granted and shall accordingly issue the corresponding order. In the event that the application for preliminary injunction is denied, the restraining order is deemed automatically vacated."*

WHEREAS, the Commission or any of its division is confronted with a number of applications for preliminary injunction;

WHEREAS, the Commission or any of its division to which the application for preliminary injunction was made, may issue a restraining order to be effective only for a period of twenty (20) days from the date of issuance;

WHEREAS, after a series of consultations and discussions, the Commission deemed it wise to extend the effectivity of the period of the restraining order to sixty (60) days from the date of issuance;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Commission RESOLVED, as it hereby RESOLVES, to amend Section 5, Rule 30 of the Comelec Rules of Procedure to read as follows:

> *"Sec. 5. Preliminary Injunction Not Granted Without Notice; Issuance of Restraining Order. No preliminary injunction shall be granted without notice to the adverse party. If it shall appear from the facts shown by affidavits or the certified petition that great or irreparable injury would result to the applicant before the matter can be heard on notice, the Commission or any Division to which the application for preliminary injunction was made, may issue a restraining order to be effective only for a period of* ***sixty (60) days*** *from the date of issuance. Within the said* ***sixty-day*** *period, the Commission or the Division as the case may be, must cause an order to be served on the respondent requiring him to show cause, at a specified time and place, why the injunction should not be granted, and determine within the same period whether or not the preliminary injunction shall be granted accordingly issue the corresponding order. In the event that the application for preliminary injunction is denied, the restraining order is deemed automatically vacated."*

This resolution supersedes any order/resolution inconsistent herewith.

Let the Executive Director implement this resolution and the Education and Information Department cause the publication of this resolution in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

SO ORDERED.

BENJAMIN S. ABALOS, SR.
Chairman

RESURRECCION Z. BORRA
Commissioner

FLORENTINO A. TUASON, JR.
Commissioner

ROMEO A. BRAWNER
Commissioner

Japan investments seen rising in 2006 on better RP prospects

Economic managers conclude roadshow to woo Japanese firms

By Michelle V. Remo

ECONOMIC OFFICIALS EXPECT foreign direct investments from Japan to grow by at least 10 percent this year.

One Japanese firm considering investing in the country was Orix Corp., which was looking at an equity stake in Ninoy Aquino Internal Airport (Naia) and the Cebu International Airport.

Tokyo-based Orix is engaged in leasing, corporate finance, real estate, insurance and banking.

"The Japan economy is awash with money, and Japanese firms are looking at really good deals," Trade Secretary Peter Favila said yesterday in a press briefing on the economic officials' roadshow in Japan held last week.

The roadshow was intended to update potential Japanese investors on the developments in the Philippine economy, such as the improving fiscal climate.

Japanese foreign direct investments to the Philippines reached P23 billion in the first nine months of 2005.

Economic managers expect the number to go up as the Japanese outlook on the Philippines was improving, especially with the recent upgrade by credit rating agencies Fitch Ratings and Standard & Poor's.

Rene Pizarro, executive director of the Philippine government's Investor Relations Office, said the Japan Credit Rating Agency (JCRA) broached the possibility of raising its outlook on the Philippines to "stable."

PAL's loss widens in Q4

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

LOSSES OF FLAG CARRIER Philippine Airlines increased to $3.1 million in the quarter ending December 2005, from $355,000 in the same quarter of 2004, due mainly to higher fuel and maintenance costs.

In a financial report filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), PAL reported that between October and December last year, operating expenses rose 9 percent to $228.2 million from $208.7 million in the same period the previous year.

Fuel costs increased by $7.7 million or 12 percent from 2004's same quarter figure of $63.9 million.

Higher fuel consumption in the last quarter last year and the increase in the average price a barrel of aviation fuel to $55.6 in 2005 from $52.4 in 2004 also bloated costs.

Higher aircraft and component as well as engine repair costs during the quarter ending December pushed up maintenance costs by 16 percent from the previous year's quarter total of $36.9 million.

Net operating revenues in the last quarter last year amounted to $250.8 million, 11 percent higher than the $226.3 million recorded in the last quarter of 2004 due to the increase in passenger revenues.

Passenger revenues grew 12 percent to $210.8 million from $187.9 million in the same quarter in 2004.

Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON AUDIT
Regional Office No. 8
Candahug, Palo, Leyte

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID PROCUREMENT OF SECURITY SERVICES

The Commission On Audit through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project.

Name of Project : Procurement of Security Services
One (1) – Senior Security rendering 12 hours – P 14,012.98 / month Duty daily on broken time
Nine (9) – Ordinary Security Guards 8 hours – P 9,577.58 / each-month Duty daily, each

Location : COA RO8, Candahug, Palo, Leyte
Approved Budget for the Contract : Php 1,547,327.28
Contract Duration One Year

The Complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	February 23 – March 10, 2006
2. Pre-Bid Conference	March 10, 2006, 8:30 a.m. COA RO8
3. Submission of Application for Eligibility and Bid Proposals	March 13 to March 24, 2006
4. Opening of Bids	March 24, 2006; 8:30 a.m. COA RO8
5. Bid Evaluation	March 25 – April 7, 2006
6. Post-qualification	April 10 – 20, 2006
7. Notice of Award	April 24, 2006

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The eligibility check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall, use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

Bid documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Php 700.00 to the COA RO8 Cashier.

The COA RO8 assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the Bid.

(Sgd.) **NENA C. MACASA**
BAC Chairman

(PDI – February 17 & 23, 2006)

TARLAC II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
San Nicolas, Concepcion, Tarlac

INVITATION TO BID

All parties interested to bid for the supply and delivery of six (6) months material requirements stated below are hereby invited to pre-qualify with Tarlac II Electric Cooperative, Inc (TARELCO II). Only pre-qualified applicants shall be invited to participate in the bidding.

PACKAGE 1.

1.	Conductor, Duplex # 6 AWG	- 28,474 meters
2.	Conductor, Poly ACSR # 2	15,400 meters
3.	Conductor, ACSR #2	- 7,220 meters
4.	Conductor, THHN, Copper, Stranded #8	14,050 meters
5.	Conductor, THHN, Copper, Stranded #6	- 13,950 meters

PACKAGE 2.

1.	Pole. Concrete, 25'-00", CI-7A, Round, CP	62 pcs.
2.	Pole, Concrete, 25'-00", CI-10A, Round, CP	50 pcs.
3.	Pole, Concrete, 30'-00", CI-7A, Round, CP	100 pcs.
4.	Pole, Concrete, 35'-00", CI-7A, Round, CP	50 pcs.
5.	Pole, Steel, 30' -00", Octagonal	50 pcs

PACKAGE 3.

1.	Meter KV2C, Fitzall, CI-20, Fm 48A, New	15 units
2.	Meter KV2C, Fitzall, CI-20, Fm 3S, New	5 units
3.	Soft Switch, Load Profile, R	10 pcs.
4.	Current Trans , 15KV, 20/15/10-5, Wirges	15 units
5.	Potential Trans , 70:1, SB-120, 8.4 KV, Wirges	15 units

PACKAGE 4.

1. Six (6) months supplies for the following items:
   a. Line Hardwares, connectors, fuse links, steel cross-arms lighting arresters, cut-outs, disconnecting switch, and grip
   b. Service entrance materials and anchor plastic seal

Prequalification documents shall be received from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM by the Prequalification, Bids and Awards Committee through its Chairman, MR. PABLITO D MAGCALAS, at TARELCO II Main Office Building located at, San Nicolas, Concepcion, Tarlac., Philippines beginning February 22, 2006.

Submission of Prequalification Documents February 28, 2006
Date and Time of Prebid Conference February 28, 2006, 1:30 PM
Date and Time of Bidding shall announced during the Prebid Conference.

Accredited suppliers previously prequalified need only to update their files with TARELCO II.

TARELCO II reserves the right to reject any and all applications to pre-qualify and to bid without offering any reason, and waive any defect therein. TARELCO II reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

Additional information shall be furnished upon request. Send all communications to the PBAC Secretariat at the address mentioned above or all Telephone No (45) 923-0460 or Fax Nos. (045) 923-0471 & 609-0224.

(Sgd.) **PABLITO D. MAGCALAS**
PBAC Chairman

(PDI - Feb 19 & 23, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON AUDIT
Regional Office No. 8
Candahug, Palo, Leyte

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF VARIOUS IT EQUIPMENT, OFFICE & OTHER EQUIPMENT AND BOOKS

The Commission On Audit through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project.

Name of Project : SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF VARIOUS IT EQUIPMENT, OFFICE AND OTHER EQUIPMENT AND BOOKS
Location : COA RO8, Candahug, Palo, Leyte
Approved Budget for the Contract : Php3,579,700.00
Delivery Period Within 15 days after acceptance of Purchase Order

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The eligibility check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall, use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	February 23-March 10, 2006
2. Pre-Bid Conference	March 10, 2006, 1:30 p.m., COA RO8
3. Submission of Application for Eligibility and Bid Proposals	March 13 to March 24, 2006
4. Opening of Bids	March 24, 2006, 1:30 p.m., COA RO8
5. Bid Evaluation	March 25-April 7, 2006
6. Post-qualification	April 10-20, 2006
7. Notice of Award	April 24, 2006

Bid documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Php700.00 to the COA RO8 Cashier.

The COA RO8 assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the Bid.

(Sgd.) **NENA C. MACASA**
BAC Chairman

(PDI–Feb 17 & 23, 2006)

PLDT '05 performance seen to beat forecasts

Subsidiaries contribute to record profit of over P32 billion

By Daxim L. Lucas

TELECOMMUNICATIONS GIANT Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) will likely beat its own earnings forecast for last year's operations, putting it on track to reporting the largest net income in local corporate history.

According to a ranking company official, PLDT will declare earnings of "closer to P32 billion" for 2005.

This figure includes a one-time gain, without which the net income would stand at P31 billion, the official said, requesting anonymity.

The latest earnings estimate surpasses stock analysts' expectations that the firm's net income will be capped at P30 billion in 2005, despite an earlier declaration by PLDT chair Manuel V. Pangilinan that the company will report a figure "north of P30 billion."

The company will release its 2005 results on Feb. 27, having already made history by posting a net income of P28 billion in 2004.

Beating earnings estimates will help boost the value of the firm for investors and help reduce its borrowing costs vis-à-vis local and foreign creditors.

According to the official, PLDT's cellular phone unit, Pilipino Telephone Corp., contributed about P9 billion to the parent firm's bottom line, having grown its subscriber base to 20.4 million last year.

PLDT's mobile communications subsidiaries, Piltel and Smart Communications Inc., hold a combined 62-percent share of the market.

Main rival Globe Telecom Inc. has 37 percent of the market. Newcomer Sun Cellular of the Gokongwei family holds a 1-percent share of the lucrative market.

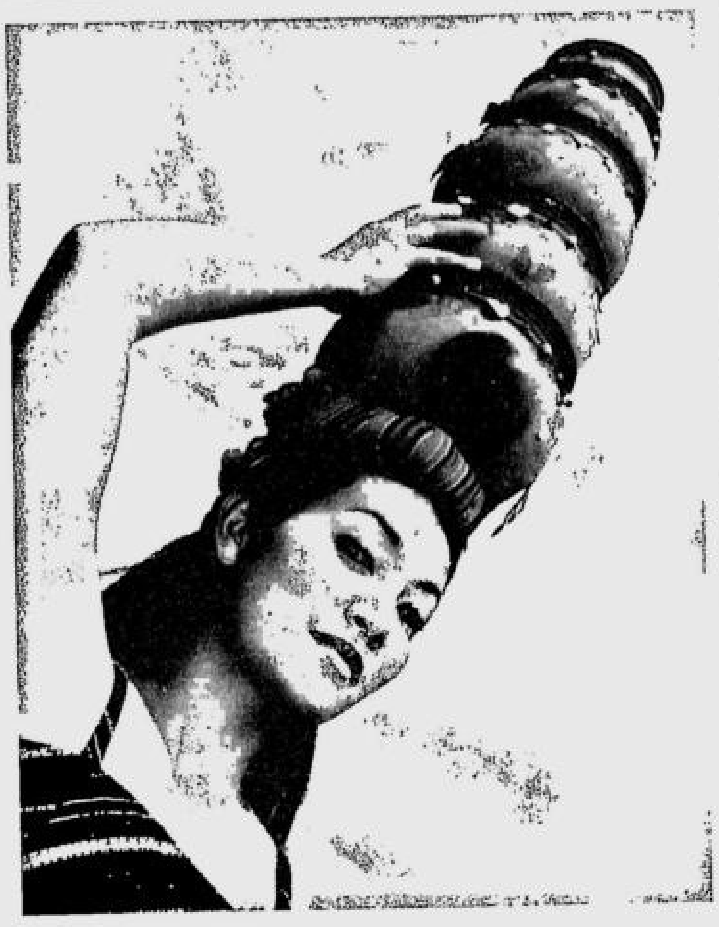
PLDT's likely record performance for 2005 would have been driven by strong growth in mobile service subscribers, although market watchers have already cautioned that this sector's growth may plateau in the near future due to rising competition.

Late last year, Pangilinan announced that PLDT's 2005 net income may reach P32 billion if the exchange rate remained in favor of the peso.

The peso has appreciated by over P2 against the US dollar since then, making it likely that the country's largest telecoms firm will meet that target.

PLDT's shares closed at P1,745 each during yesterday's trading at the Philippine Stock Exchange, lower by P10 from the previous day's price.

The stock managed to recover some of its losses in recent weeks caused by a downgrade on concerns over the sustainability of its earnings.



BALANCING ACT
Ritchel Saclag Malannag from Lubuagan, Kalinga, sells the earthenware jars piled on top of her head for P100 to P300 apiece.
EV ESPIRITU/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Gov't to settle refund claims of Japan firms

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT IS NOW WORKING OUT a scheme to settle the VAT refund claims of Japanese firms that are engaged in various Philippine projects funded by Japan.

The latest refund claims worth P736 million are on top of the P423 million earlier claimed by the Japanese firms.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said the P423 million in VAT refund claims were supposed to go to Japanese firms that implemented projects funded by Japan's official development assistance (ODA) in the form of grants.

The P736 million in VAT refund claims are supposed to go to Japanese firms that worked on projects financed by ODAs in the form of loans.

"We are doing some validation work now, and we will soon come up with a payment scheme," Teves yesterday said.

He said the Department of Finance is now coordinating with the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Philippine Ports Authority and the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) to verify the claims of each Japanese firm.

The Japanese firms have been complaining about the delay in the processing of the refund claims. The Japan Bank for International Cooperation, the Philippines' biggest source of ODA, was reported to have considered the suspension of loan provisions to the Philippines until the VAT claims were settled.

But finance officials said the conflict between the Philippine and Japanese governments has already been threshed out.

Aboitiz firms' power deal gets ERC nod

By Abigail L. Ho

THE ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION has approved the electric power supply agreement between Aboitiz-led firms Hydroelectric Development Corp. (Hedcor) and Davao Light and Power Co. Inc.

In a Feb. 13 decision, the regulatory body acknowledged how Hedcor edged out two other private generation companies—Aggreko International Projects Ltd. and Marubeni Energy Services Corp.—to bag the supply deal.

It also recognized the need of Davao Light to contract the services of a private generation firm for its supply requirements.

In its application, Davao Light said that while power demand has been increasing in its franchise area, it has also been experiencing low-voltage power supply due to lack of power sources in Southern Mindanao, inadequate transmission capacity in Northern Mindanao and an impending supply shortfall by 2008.

"(Davao Light) entered a new power supply agreement with Hedcor as its supplier in order to meet this increasing demand and the future power requirements of its customers," the company said.

Using actual power bills for the July 26-Aug. 25, 2005 billing period, it was determined that Napocor and Transco charged Davao Light P3.0544 per kilowatt-hour (kWh), the same rate that Hedcor had proposed.

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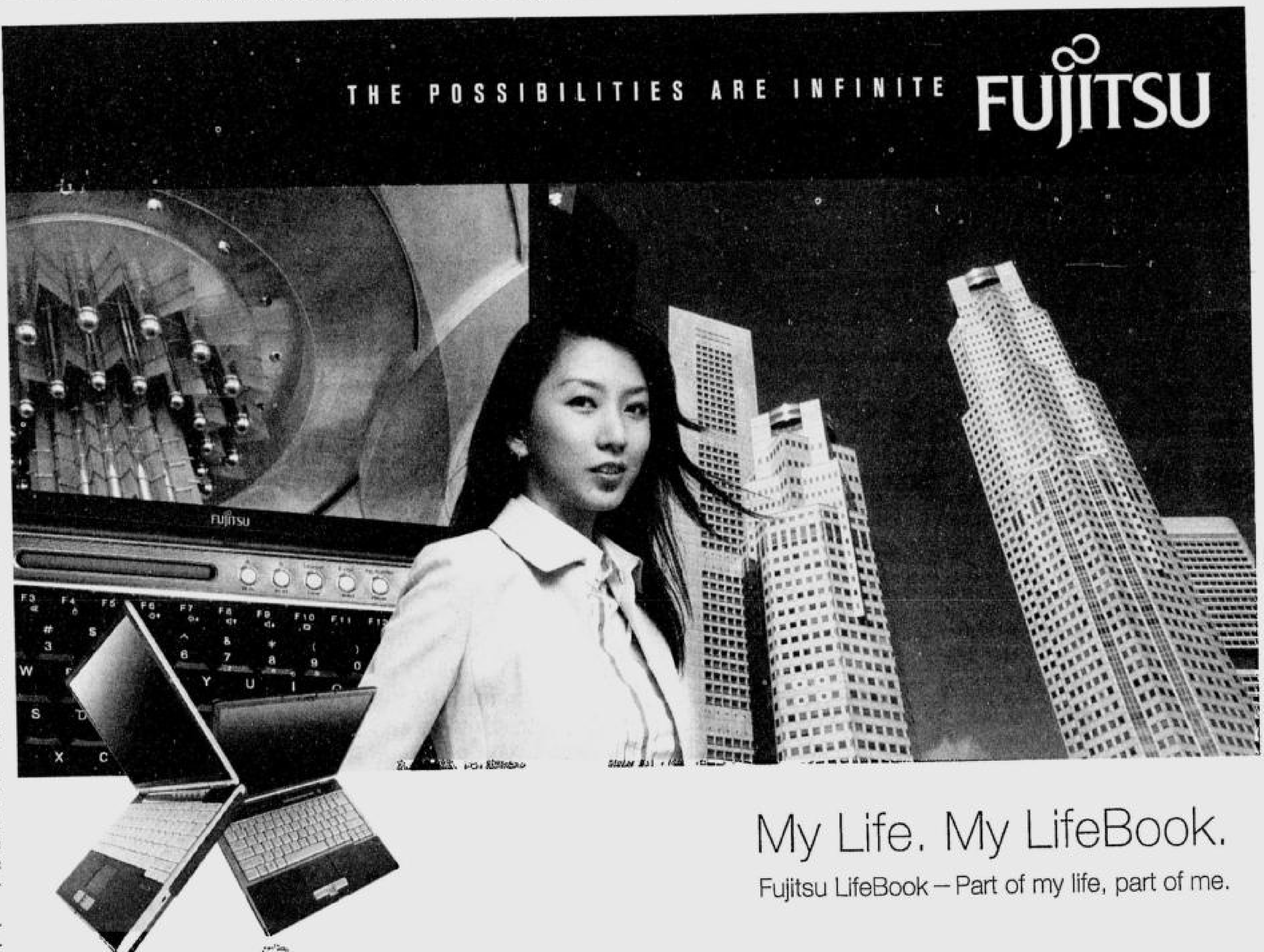

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Romans 12: 1-2 (Phillips' translation)

MARIA LUISA CANIESO-DORONILA, Ph.D.

Died in the service of Philippine basic education in Manucan, Zamboanga del Norte on February 19, 2006.

She is survived by her husband, **Atty. Cirilo Doronila**, children **Philip Albert**, **Vincent Angelo**, **Cirilo Gregorio** and **Katerina**, daughters-in-law **Armina** and **Jonee**, grandchildren, sisters and a brother, and brother-in-law **Amando Doronila**.

Her remains lie in state at the Gumersindo Garcia Hall, Church of the Risen Lord (UP Protestant Chapel), Diliman, Quezon City. Necrological services are held after the 6 p.m. mass every night, sponsored by the Education Forum (February 21,), the UP Integrated School and the UP College of Education (February 22), the UP System and UP Diliman (February 23), the friends of Malu (February 24), and the UP Center for Integrative and Development Studies, the Education Research Program, the Third Elementary Education Program (TEEP), and Basic Education for Mindanao (BEAM) (February 25).

The Mass of the Resurrection will be held on Sunday morning, February 26, at 9 a.m. Cremation follows.

VENICE BORJA AGANA

CONGRESSWOMAN
FIRST DISTRICT OF BOHOL
1987 TO 1998

Peacefully joined her Creator on Tuesday, February 21, 2006.

Her beloved children, **Patricia (Gay)** and **Edgar Tan**, **Marcelino IV (Yakie)** and **Izza Agana**, **Natividad (Bibing)** and **Ramon Villacorta**, **Jacinto (Philip) Agana**, **Asuncion (Pinky)** and **Jesus Quimpo**, **Roberto (Bobby)** and **Sarah Agana**; brother, **Castelar** (†) and **Sylvia Borja**; sisters, **Monaliza** and **Rafael Pronstroller**, **Dolores** and **Hernan Lopez Jr.**; grandchildren, nephews and nieces, and other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Capilla Francisco, Santuario de San Antonio Parish, Forbes Park, Makati City.

Necrological services and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass will be held at the House of Representatives today, February 23, 2006 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Interment will take place on Saturday, February 25, 2006 at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City, following the 9:00 a.m. Mass at the Santuario de San Antonio Parish in Forbes Park, Makati City.

More classified ads on pages A15 & B4

ANTONINA SORIANO CUNA

Peacefully joined her Creator
and her husband,**Constantino D. Cuna, Jr.**
on February 11, 2006 at the age of 79,
in Glendale, Los Angeles California, U.S.A.

Her bereaved children, **Gary** and **Neneng Villanueva**, **Lorna** and **Ting Cenzon**, and **Danny** and **Pinky Mascardo**; grandchildren, **Arpi**, **Alvin Jay** and **Anne**, **Meg** and **Joe**, **Peter**, **Maite** and **AJ**, **Carla**, **Donna** and **Patrick**, **Debbie** and **Patrick**, **Dane**, and **Nikki**; and great grandchildren request the relatives, friends and the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her cremated remains will arrive on Friday, February 24, 2006 and will lie at the Christ the King Church, Greenmeadows Avenue, Quezon City, where daily Masses will be offered.

Her interment shall be on Sunday, February 26, 2006 at the Himlayang Pilipino Memorial Park, after the 10:00 a.m. Mass at the Christ the King Church.

Speaker Jose de Venecia, Jr.

and the

Members of the House of Representatives

mourn the passing away of a former colleague

HON. VENICE BORJA-AGANA

in the 8th, 9th and 10th Congress

on February 21, 2006

Her remains will be brought from Santuario de San Antonio Church, Forbes Park, Makati City, to the Plenary Hall, House of Representatives, Batasan Hills, Quezon City, for a Requiem Mass and Necrological Services at 10:00 a.m. today, February 23, 2006.

After the Requiem Mass and Necrological Services at the House of Representatives, her remains will be brought back to Santuario de San Antonio Church, Forbes Park, Makati City.

Interment will be held on Saturday, February 25, 2006, at Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City, after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at the Santuario de San Antonio Church, Forbes Park, Makati City.

We request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

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Our Dearly Beloved

ATTY. JOSE "TOTOY" LAROSA REYES

Now rests in the infinite warmth and embrace of our Lord.
He joined our Creator on the 21st of February 2006, at the age of 72.

His loving children, grandchildren, sisters and all her relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Interment will be on Tuesday, February 28, 2006. Place and time of burial to be announced later.

CLASSIFIEDS

ASSUMPTION ILOILO SILVER JUBILEE

The Iloilo Assumption Batch 1980 recently celebrated its Silver Jubilee last Feb. 3-5 with a Grand Velada and a Homecoming Mass at Assumption Iloilo. Coming together after 25 years, these alumnae had a chance to relive the Assumption spirit and to bear witness to the gift of receiving an Assumption education. Shown at the center is Sr. Stella Marie Sanz, RA.

" I had a great time.
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"Omboy"

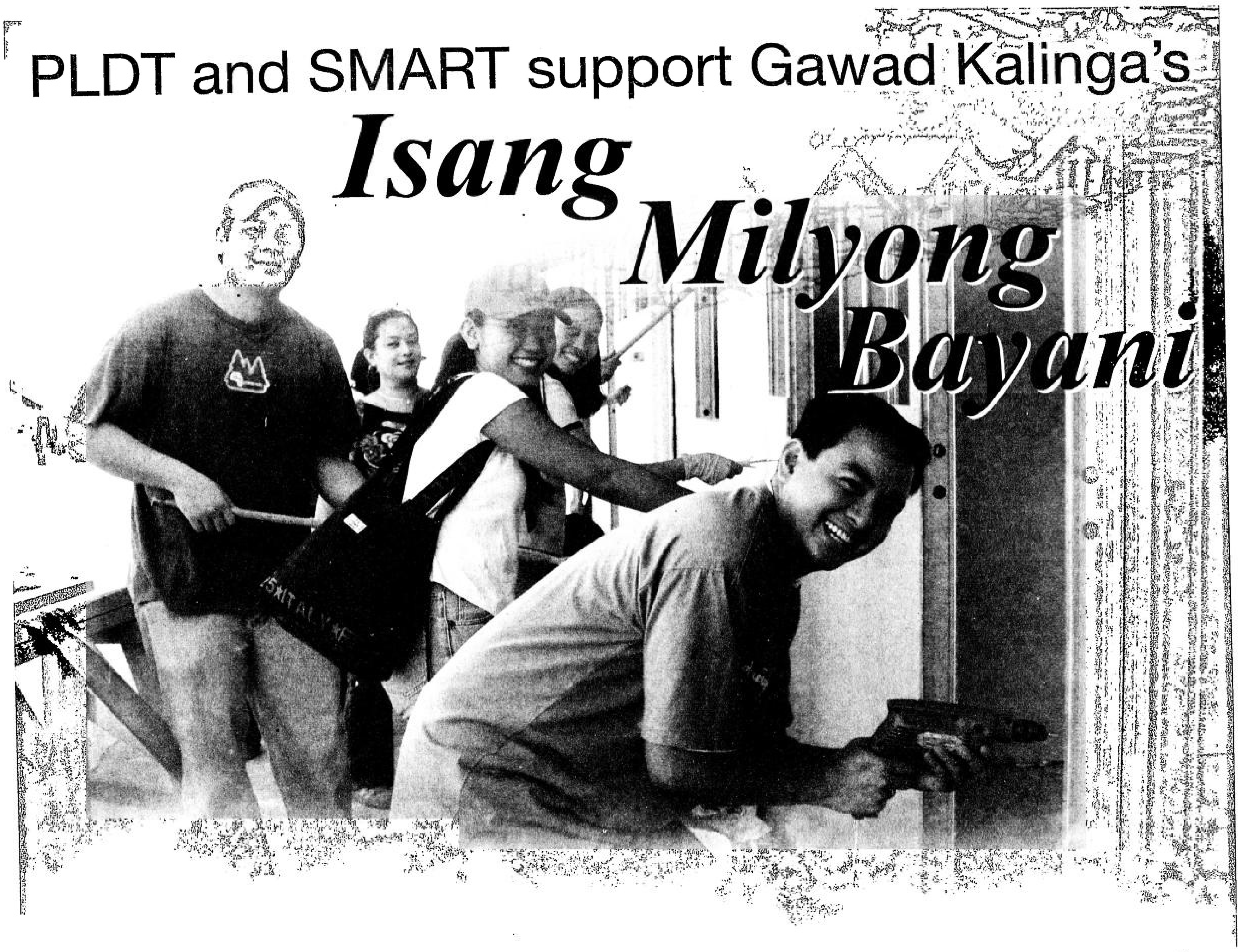
Florencio A. Suzara

joined our Heavenly Father on February 22, 2006.

His wife, Finina (+), children David (+), Rochelle and Timmy, Top and Rom, Mikey, grandchildren Gabby, Sofia, Alonzo, Nicola and Crista, brothers and sisters Bolix (+) and Sonia, Tandit and Lorlyn, Ikoy and Carole, Spanky and Cossette, Binggay, Rocky and Thelma, Leps and Vicky, Nitz, Estela, Fermin and Mildred, Benjie and Cez, nephews, nieces, relatives and friends request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His ashes will be at the St. Jerome Emiliani and Sta. Susana Church, Alabang Town Center until Friday, February 24, 2006.

PLDT and SMART support Gawad Kalinga's *Isang Milyong Bayani*



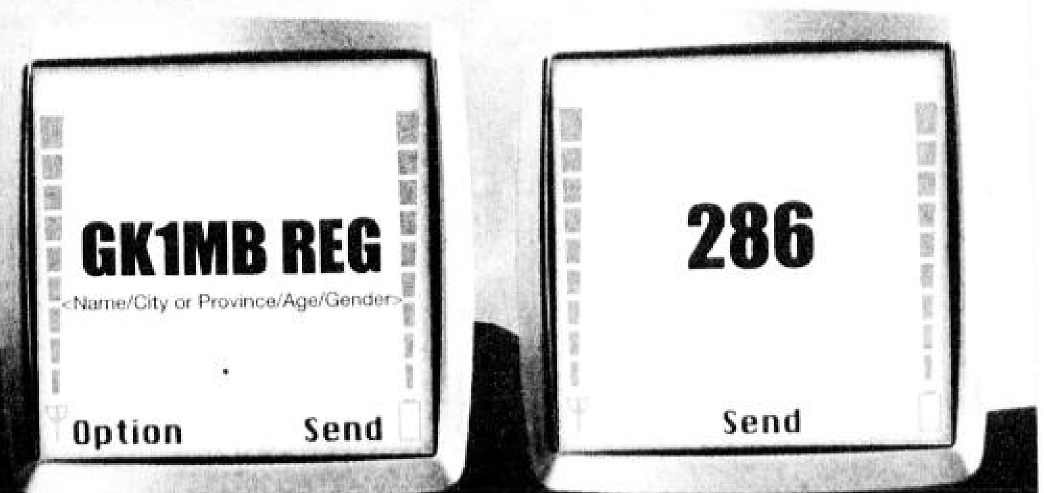
Be a GK Hero
Help build our nation

To achieve the mission of building 700,000 homes in 7,000 communities in 7 years, Gawad Kalinga (GK) has embarked on a new undertaking. They aim to mobilize a nationwide project called *GK Isang Milyong Bayani* (GK 1MB) that will inspire Filipinos to be the heroes that they truly are.

Through the support of partners like PLDT and SMART, a massive registration campaign is taking place. The goal: one million volunteers by the end of this year. Interested individuals can sign-up through SMS, e-mail, and hotline numbers.

Gawad Kalinga invites everyone to take part in this movement. From local government units to private corporations, schools and non-government organizations, there is a role each one can play to make GK 1MB a reality!

To register as a volunteer for the GK 1MB via text*:



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GAWAD KALINGA

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February 25, 2006

8am-2pm GK 1MB National Build in Gawad Kalinga Villages
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Rally Points: GK Youth at UP Oblation; Batang Bayani at Quezon City Hall;
Bayani Brigade at Pasiklab, Commonwealth, QC;
Couples for Christ, Kapitbahayan and corporate partners
at Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife
4:30pm Converge at Quezon Memorial Circle for GK 1MB Rally for Nation Building
6:00pm GK 1MB Concert featuring Bamboo and other top bands

Subscribers who register will automatically be included in Gawad Kalinga's updates via SMS. To stop receiving updates from Gawad Kalinga, text **GK1MB OFF** and send to **286**. You may also register through e-mail: gk1mb@yahoo.com or by calling the GK hotline at 726-7261

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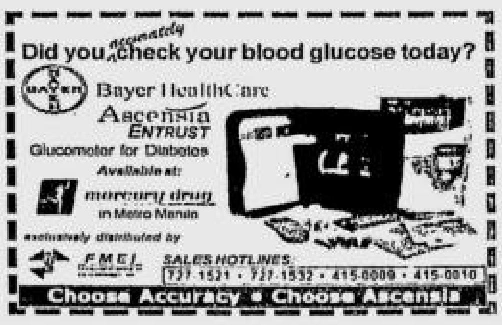
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First meal of the day

COUNTRY COOKING

Micky Fenix

BREAKFAST, *ALMUSAL* OR *AGAHAN*, IS PERsonal. It's usually what you want to have. It's not surprising to have a breakfast table like ours where each one's preference is laid out.

The three men at home agree on their breakfast menu—canned goods with *pan de sal* or dried fish with *sinangag* and *tsokolate*. I'm the only one who drinks coffee and can subsist each morning on bread with butter or with cheese or with sardines.

My two grandfathers had totally different breakfasts. Every morning of his life, my *lolo* Juan Malixi always had oatmeal with milk and took one cup of instant coffee. He'd break that monotony at Christmas by adding *queso de bola*, sliced a bit thicker and into half-moon pieces. His oatmeal diet and his daily walk didn't protect him from a stroke though. I think that's why I'm suspicious of healthful recommendations.

Gin gang

My *lolo* Alvaro Fenix had a more colorful menu. He went to market early morning to get liver from a freshly slaughtered pig, and had it grilled at home just right. He spiked his coffee with gin, one of the things his gang did (they had a coat of arms that featured a skull with two crossed gin bottles). He started drinking very late in life, as a way of coping with the death of his eldest son in the war.

My siblings and I grew up eating bread at breakfast. There was no time to cook rice when we're all hurrying to go to school.

Breakfast fare would change when there was time to do something special like hotcakes on weekends, which is why pancakes in restaurants are always a great treat for me.

During Christmas vacation, the older girls cooked Excelente ham with sugar and, in the process, ruined a frying pan with the hardened caramelized sugar.

Our morning scene would include vendors plying their wares. The *puto-cuchinta* and *taho* vendors' resonant calls could be heard several streets away. Both carried containers suspended on wooden bars balanced on their shoulders. Each container was distinct—the *puto* in round tin cans with cone-shaped covers and the *taho* in deep metallic ones with separate compartments for the *tofu*, *sago* and syrup.

There was always a race to find loose change before running after the vendors who always walked fast.

2 breakfasts

In the rural areas where one woke up before sunrise, there would be a first breakfast, always light, perhaps *pan de sal* and coffee, something just to warm the stomach. The *panegunda*, a second breakfast when the sun was up, was heavier—rice with *tapa*, *longganisa* or *tocino*. The combination of those with egg gave birth to the *tapsilog, longsilog and tocilog*, which you can order at any time of the day at restaurants today.

The usual beverage for breakfast is coffee, chocolate or tea. Chocolate poured on rice was a shock the first time I saw it. My first reaction was to ask why wasn't *champorado*, best paired with dried fish, ordered instead. But even more shocking was watching someone pour coffee on his *sinangag*.

My travels throughout the country have produced memorable breakfasts. At one hotel in Puerto Princesa, Palawan, there were two huge smoked mackerels with a lot of fried rice and scrambled eggs. In Dumaguete, *budbud kabug*—*suman* made with millet—was served with thick chocolate. In Zamboanga, it was the *satti* in reddish sauce taken with *pusô*. In Batangas, at the Lemery livestock market, I tasted *goto* for the first time, stewed beef innards and cow head colored with *annatto* (*achuete*).

The heaviest breakfast I've had was at a Bohol resort. My host made me taste everything the place offered. There was *tinolang tanguigue*, the Visayan version of the *sinigang*. *Danggit* and small lapu-lapu were fried crisp, taken with rice soaked with *sikuwate*, Boholano for *tsokolate*. Small *dilis* was cooked as *torta*. Several native cakes were also served—*puto maya*, glutinous white rice mixed with violet rice called *tapol* and shaped into circles, tasting palpably of ginger; the sweetish *suman*, the saltier *budbud* and the *dinamugan* made of banana. Best of all, there was sea urchin (*tuyom, suwake*) freshly harvested from the sea below our cantilevered breakfast place.

Missed

The breakfast I wanted to have but missed was in Vigan, Ilocos Sur. My food guide told me about *sinanglaw*, a soup of beef innards and meat with coagulated blood cooked early morning in a place near the post office. I asked her to bring me there but she hemmed and hawed until we missed the chance. By 10 a.m., everything was gone. I'm guessing she prevented me from going because I would have been the only woman there and because she thought that, being from the city, I wouldn't have cared for this very local cooking.

All that came to mind over the breakfast buffet we had in Baguio during a recent family reunion. There were the local *longganisa*, always made smaller than in other places so it was nicknamed "short-*gánisa*," corned beef paired with French fries and *daing na bangus*, *sinangag*, and the obligatory eggs done two ways, fried and scrambled with tomatoes and onions.

At another table were the famous breads of the place and raisin bread from the Country Club, good to eat by itself but superb when taken with butter and Good Shepherd strawberry jam (my preferred Country Club jam had run out). Strawberry, being in season, was served fresh and taken with yogurt or cream.

I tasted everything, perhaps egged on by the good feeling all around at this particular family reunion.

BAGUIO BREAKFAST: corned beef with French fries, *longganisa*, fried egg, *daing na bangus* with tomatoes and scrambled egg

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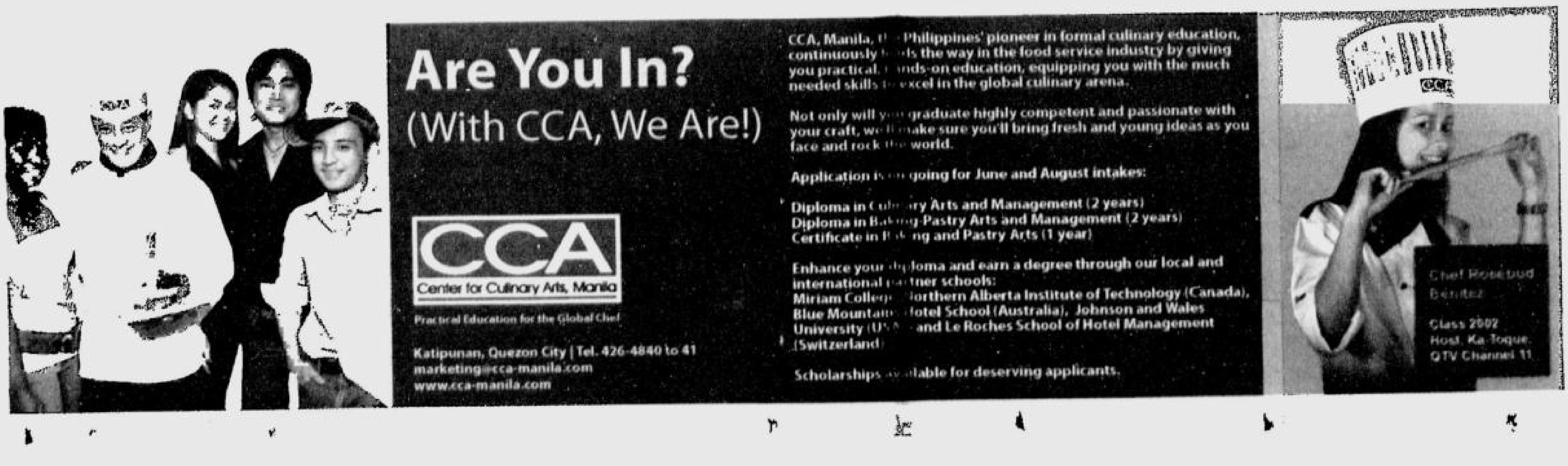
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CCA, Manila, the Philippines' pioneer in formal culinary education, continuously leads the way in the food service industry by giving you practical, hands-on education, equipping you with the much needed skills to excel in the global culinary arena.
Not only will you graduate highly competent and passionate with your craft, we'll make sure you'll bring fresh and young ideas as you face and rock the world.
Application is on-going for June and August intakes:
Diploma in Culinary Arts and Management (2 years)
Diploma in Baking-Pastry Arts and Management (2 years)
Certificate in Baking and Pastry Arts (1 year)
Enhance your diploma and earn a degree through our local and international partner schools:
Miriam College, Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (Canada), Blue Mountains Hotel School (Australia), Johnson and Wales University (USA) and Le Roches School of Hotel Management (Switzerland)
Scholarships available for deserving applicants.
Chef Rosebud Benitez
Class 2002
Host, Ka-Toque, QTV Channel 11

The secret to Guyito's fame

WHY IS CARABAO'S milk so hard to find? What I find is sometimes not pure. Do you have a source?

LEO GALVAN

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

I replied to a similar request for a source of carabao milk sometime ago. If I recall correctly it was from a lady whose relative was cancer-stricken and needed carabao milk in taking her medication. In Japan, I'm told that water buffalo milk is considered prime commodity for its healing properties.

Carabao's milk is far more difficult to source because the native carabao's milk production is low. Good news is that, through the efforts of the Philippine Carabao Institute (PCI), those days will soon be over as they are currently engineering hybrids that give far more milk and meat.

The hybrids are called ET's (Embryo Transfers), derived from the Murrah buffalo, a river type Indian native, and the Philippine carabao, a swamp type. (There are two types of buffalo: river type, used mainly for dairy and meat; and swamp type, used for draft.) The first batch of "in vitro ET" babies were named Glory, Erap, Fidel and Cory.

Last year I was at the Philippine General Hospital's Cancer Institute upon the invitation of Dr. Cecilia Llave when senior agriculturist Danilda Hufana-Duran of the PCI did her presentation on Water Buffalo: From Draft to Milk and Meat for Every Filipino.

According to her research, the importance of buffalo milk cannot be underestimated. It contains less water, more total solids, more fat, slightly more lactose and has more protein than cow's milk. It generally contains more than 16 percent total solids compared to the cow's 12-14 percent. In addition, its fat content is usually 50-60 percent higher,

Its butterfat is 6-8 percent while the cow's is 3-5 percent. The high butterfat content gives it higher energy value. And, due to its high fat content, the anticancer component called CLA (conjugated linoleic acid) is expected to be higher. Buffalos are grazing animals and studies abroad show that milk from cows allowed to graze has increased amounts of CLA than those given commercial feeds.

Hence, carabaos that feed purely by grazing are said to have higher anti-cancer components in their milk.

HOW CARA-MEAT COMPARES WITH OTHER MEATS

TYPE	CALORIES	FAT	CHOLESTEROL mg
Buffalo	***143***	***2.42***	***82***
Ostrich	142	3.0	83
Beef - lean steak	211	9.3	86
Chicken - flesh	190	7.4	89
Pork- lean	212	9.7	86
Turkey - flesh	170	5.0	76

CLA is reported to control body fat gain, enhance immunity, reduce inflammation, decrease tumors and, thus, is said to be anti-carcinogenic (inhibits proliferation of human malignant cells and colorectal cancer cells), anti-atherosclerosis (prevents thickening of blood vessels), anti-obesity and anti-diabetic. For children, it is extremely beneficial in aiding growth and in the development of healthy teeth.

When it comes to meat, the tale of the chart tells you why "cara-meat" might be worth considering.

We have just given you enough reasons to eat all the *pastillas* you want! And if this does not justify Guyito's (our beloved INQUIRER carabao) fame, I don't know what will!

Call Philippine Carabao Center, Nueva Ecija at 044-456 0730. For carabao's milk and its sinful byproducts, including low-fat cheese and *pastillas*. Call Saint Mary Dairy at 8232835 and 0917-2041952.

Now let's move on to carcinogenic stuff... Ha-ha-ha! All those medical terms were just much too much for me!

"ET," the buffalo of the future

Chocolate!

If you are a chocoholic, you must try Fortune Ledesma's Chocolate Cake. It is soooooooo good! Call 8443663 or 8939075. It's the dense and gooey type. Order now!

Free range

Lately, I have been seeing things labeled "free-range." What does free-range mean?

ABET

In dream land, anything labeled free-range supposedly means that the meat you are about to purchase, before death, lived a life of luxury. Lived naturally, in a range, as the term suggests; free to do as it was created to—bask in the sun, play, pick, graze and eat grass; roam, and, in the end, killed humanely!

Sad to say, it's often a tall tale, unless you see where and how it's been raised!

Brownie recipe

I am Ina. I love to bake and in my school we were asked to bake for a bake sale. Can you share a nice brownie recipe? Not too expensive and not hard to make. Thank you.

½ c + 2 tbsp butter
1 1/3 c sugar
3/4 c + 2 tbsp dark unsweetened cocoa powder
¼ tsp salt
1 tsp vanilla extract
3 eggs
½ c all-purpose flour
2/3 c nuts

Preheat oven 350° F.

In a double boiler, melt butter, add sugar, cocoa and salt. Mix well. Cool mixture.

Add vanilla, then the eggs one at a time, stirring vigorously after each addition.

Add the flour and nuts, mix well. Pour into an 8" square pan. Bake for 20 minutes. Glaze if desired.

Glaze:
3/4 c cream
180 g bittersweet chocolate
1 tbsp light corn syrup

Bring cream to light boil. Remove from heat. Add chocolate and corn syrup, mix until mixture is smooth.

E-mail raspiras@inquirer.com.ph

A touch of sand and sea in Makati

THE NAME EVOKES BLUE SKIES, WARM waters and endless sunshine of the Mediterranean. Azure Café, with its décor of lighthouses, boat wheels, anchors and oars, draws you in. You can sip a coffee *granita* and relish a tantalizingly hot made-on-the-spot *panini* or *foccacia*, both coming with sumptuous fillings—cheese, tuna, chicken, hot sardines, *quesong puti*, chicken *adobo*.

Or you can opt for a cold deli sandwich: prime roast beef, smoked pastrami or farmer's ham on oversized white bread.

Located on the G/F, S & L Bldg., De la Rosa cor. Esteban St., Legazpi Village, Azure Café is just a few short blocks away from the Makati Medical Center and Plaza.

Coffee is brewed with freshly ground beans upon order. Regular aficionados claim it's the best in the neighborhood.

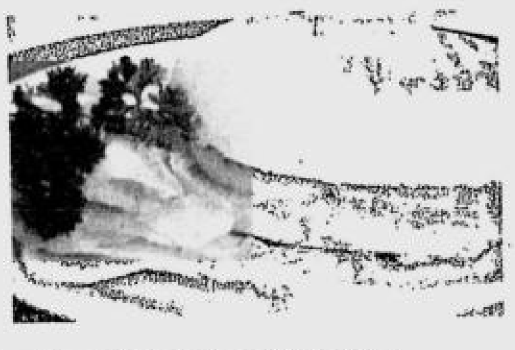
Open daily for breakfast and lunch, Azure also offers options for health buffs such as lettuce greens with tofu and a very special house dressing. The café serves exotic specialty pastas like its popular *adobo* pasta with slivers of tart green mango, *itlog na maalat* and chopped tomatoes. Other favorites are the flavorful *taba ng talangka* pasta and the Spanish El Rey *chorizo* pasta.

Azure's signature drink for a hot summer day—the exquisite Chocnut shake, evoking childhood memories of trips to the *sari-sari* store for the favorite penny candy. It's definitely worth the extra calories.

Try Azure's absolutely scrumptious homemade goodies for dessert: the moistest rum cake, chocolate cake or freshly baked apple pie. Cookies and milk anyone? They've got chocolate chip, oatmeal raisin and chewy chocolate crinkles.

Customers are a medley of doctors and medical staff, expatriates from embassies and banks, who enjoy the excellent food and warm, welcoming atmosphere. To quote some very satisfied customers, "The food is just great, the prices reasonable, the staff exceptionally warm, with big smiles and personal greetings—what more can one ask for?"

Azure Cafe is at G/F, S & L Building, De la Rosa cor. Esteban St., Legazpi Village, Makati. Call 8173446 or 8130395 for free delivery within the neighborhood.



ADOBO pasta (above) and Panini (right)

CHOCNUT shake

PRIVATE tatami rooms

New look for old favorite

MAKATI SHANGRI-LA HAS RE-LAUNCHED its Japanese restaurant, Inagiku, after a renovation.

Executive assistant manager for food and beverage Randal Linhart had a Zen-inspired setting arranged for the occasion with kimono-clad staff and background music from the traditional Japanese koto instrument.

The new Inagiku features orange back-lit hallway with latticework. An intricate Japanese kimono is elegantly displayed by the entrance. A focal point is a brass on brass piece by Ovvian Castrillo of the Eduardo Castrillo Studio.

The restaurant has used bright colors, rich fabric and intricate pattern in making its new interior special and different.

Though known since 1994 for specializing in tempura dishes, Inagiku has a lineup of new dishes.

During the re-launch, sushi chef Wataru Hikawa prepared Sushi and Sashimi Moriawase for appetizers. They were followed by a grilled platter of seafood, beef and vegetables. Dessert was a plate of seasonal Japanese fruits and sorbet.

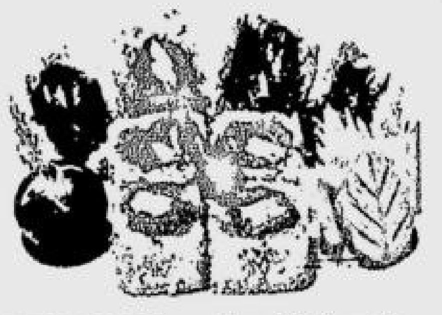
Present at the event were Tom Zita, chair of Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts; Makati Shangri-La's general manager Jarlath Lynch, resident manager Sigi Bierbaumer, director of sales and marketing Lourdes Juco, and director of communications Joy Wassmer.

Guests included Tonyboy Cojuangco and Gretchen Barretto; Jolly and Gigi Mabanta; Rhoda Campos of Rustan's; Marietta Santos; Jose Periquet Sr. and Chloe Periquet; Irene Francisco; Dr. Daniel Vasquez; Cynthia Mamon of Sunmicrosystems; Yoshio Nagamine, president, Terumo Philippines Corp.; Ryukichi Kawaguchi, chairman, Marubeni Corp.; Yoshinori Isozaki, executive director, San Miguel Corp.; and Kazuo Fukuda, general manager, Hitachi Ltd.

Inagiku is at 2/L, Makati Shangri-La Hotel. Call 8138888 local 7588 or 7599.

ACRYLIC-COVERED fishpond walkway

ALL SUNDAYS of February are special at Outback Restaurant. The eight-ounce Angus Prime Rib, served with Garden Fresh Salad and side dish, is available for a special Sunday price of P815. Outback Restaurants are in Glorietta 4, Libis and Alabang Town Center.



KITARO'S Salmon Kawa Maki, made of toasted salmon skin, cucumber sesame seeds and a dab of teriyaki sauce, is available at Kitaro branches nationwide. For delivery, call 9111115.

A taste of 8 Chinese regional cooking

DINING OUT

TANG CITY, which has branches in Makati, Cubao, Quezon City, and Manila, offers food from China's eight culinary capitals: Shanghai, Beijing, Guangdong, Szechuan, Fookien, Shangtung, Yangchow and Hong Kong. The restaurant's extensive menu lists almost 200 dishes. One of the bestsellers is the Roast Duck, served with plum sauce. The restaurant serves crabs in 12 different ways. It also has exotic dishes such as Siao Long Pao, Tong Po Pork, Fried Layered Pao, 8 Glutinous Rice and other traditional dim sum and noodle specialties. Popular dishes are special rice toppings, including Honey Roast Asado Rice, Soy Chicken Rice, and Lechon Macau Rice, all at affordable prices and in big servings. Call 8161340 (Tang City Glorietta) or 5231919 (Tang City Robinsons Ermita).

FLAVOURS OF CHINA offers prime meat cuts marinated in special Asian herbs and spices and sauteed with authentic Chinese sauces. The restaurant's bestsellers are Seafood Fried Rice, Deep-fried Boneless Chicken in Lemon Sauce, Crispy Tender Beef, Green Seafood, Curry Fish Fillet, Steamed Fish Fillet with Fresh Garlic in Light Superior Sauce, Spicy Squid Head and the combo platter (dim sum specialties). Flavours of China branches are at Tomas Morato, SM Southmall, SM Batangas, SM San Lazaro. A branch will open soon in SM Sucat.

SUSHI-YA offers Bento meals, freshly cooked tempura and an array of main courses.

Sushi-Ya is extending its Sushi-YUM break promo, 3-5 p.m. (mall branches) and 5-7 p.m. (non-mall outlets). Order any of Sushi-Ya's main courses and get one rice or miso soup free. You also get free Mori or Yuki Meal with every three orders of Donburi meals or get P100 off when you order any three Bento Box Meals.

These promos are available at all Sushi-Ya branches at Tomas Morato, Libis, SM Megamall, SM Pampanga, Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons Place Manila and Market! Market!

QUEENS CRYSTAL GARDEN presents the first Kebab and Wine Festival in Manila, Kebab and Wine on a Wednesday Night. The event is held every second Wednesday of the month. Feast on nine non-vegetarian and six vegetarian kebabs complemented with sparkling red and white wine, juice, tropical punch and soft drinks. The kebab feast is at 6:30-8:30 p.m. Queens Crystal Garden Restaurant is at 146 Jupiter St., between Makati Ave. and Reposo St., Makati City. Call 8951316/1816, 0917-8955333 and 0917-8113368.

Caterers meet to discuss trends

THE SECOND FOOD CATERERS Conference of the Philippines will be held Feb. 28 at Teatro Marikina, Shoe Avenue, Sta. Ilena, Marikina City.

Theme of the event is New Trends, New Equipment. Entrance fee, inclusive of food, is P500.

The event is organized by the Food Caterers Association of the Philippines (FCAP).

Food caterers, business people, food experts and enthusiasts have a chance to learn new trends in the catering industry.

Topics to be covered include food hygiene and sanitation, healthy seafood cooking, new trends on food styling, table floral styling, cooking demo, lectures and demo on fruit and vegetable carving and quick desserts, understanding the E-Vat Law, old ways and new techniques from Nestlé and Unilever, and FCAP as an organization.

Call FCAP at 4100394 or e-mail info@fcap.com.ph.

FOOD stylist Delores Custer

Pâté, pasta and 'kakanin'

THE REGGIE ASPIRAS SCHOOL OF Culinary Arts is offering the following classes:

Feb. 24—Delicious and Easy Pâtés (all new): Duck with Chocolate and Fruit Sauce; Chicken Liver, three kinds: Mousse, Country, Liquor-scented; toasts, points and bread sticks

Feb. 25—Ribs from around the World (all new): Costillas de Naranja (Orange Ribs), Black Bean and Tea Chinese Style, Asian Style in Coconut Milk, Zinfandel Ribs, Baby Back Korean Style; side dishes

Feb. 27—Kakanin 2006 (all new): Suman sa Lihiya, White Kuchinta with Kalamay, Banana Suman, Biko, Suman with Chicken Stuffing, Ube Suman

March 1—Easy Pasta (some of Reggie's favorite recipes, all new): Ricotta and Mushrooms, Scampi and Artichoke, Mixed Meat in Caramelized Balsamic Sauce, Scallops in Light Tomato Cream, Shrimp Pasta with Vegetables and Saffron Cream Pasta

Call 9289296, 9273008 and 6335162.

Cooking from the experts

The San Miguel Pure Foods Culinary Center is offering a hands-on cooking workshop, "Can't Cook? Want to Cook," on March 11, 18, 25 and April 1, 8 a.m.-1 p.m., at the San Miguel Pure Foods Culinary Center, Legaspi cor. Eagle Sts., Barrio Ugong, Pasig.

Fee is at P3,300. Participating My Great Food Club members are entitled to 20-percent discount.

Call 6719876 local 402, 404 or 405 or log on to www.mygreatfood.com

Top US food stylist to hold workshop

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE PHILIPPINES, renowned American food stylist Delores Custer will conduct an intensive one-day workshop on food styling on March 4 at ELJ Communications Center, QC.

Presented by Food Magazine, the country's largest-selling culinary magazine, on the occasion of its 10th anniversary, and Magnolia Gold Butter, the seminar will focus on the latest trends in food styling, how to deal with difficult foods, use of color and texture for maximum effect, how to choose props, tools of the trade, and shooting for film and camera.

Custer will also demonstrate a live photo shoot.

Based in New York, Custer teaches food styling at the Culinary Institute of America and at the New School University in New York City. She has styled for international brands such as Nabisco, Pillsbury, Time-Life Books, Campbell's, Mrs. Fields, Tupperware, Bon Appetit, Chocolatier and Cuisinart. She has also worked with Julia Child, Debbie Fields, Paul Newman, and Patti LaBelle. Her works have appeared in TV commercials, movies, cookbooks, magazines, food labels, and food packages.

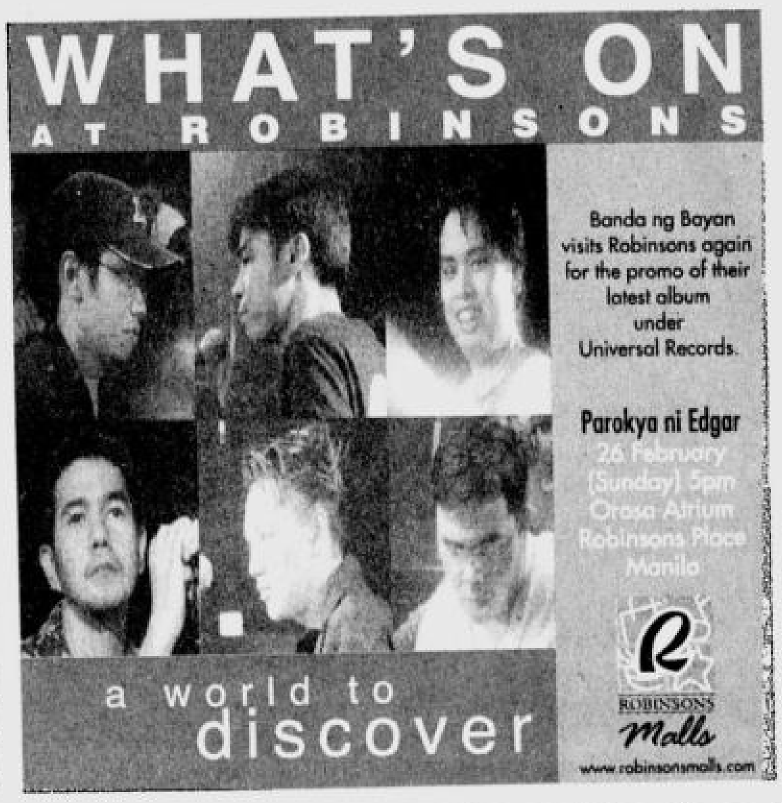
To assist Custer during the seminar is Mary Grapsas, herself a US-based food stylist whose works have appeared in Teen Vogue, St. Louis Homes and Lifestyles, the Food Network and national TV commercial spots.

Chefs, culinary instructors, art directors, photographers, cinematographers, restaurateurs, caterers, food manufacturers, food exporters and importers, artists and food enthusiasts are encouraged to attend.

The special early-bird seminar fee of P6,500 has been extended to Feb. 28. Starting March 1, the seminar fee is P7,500. The fee includes snacks, lunch at Restaurant 9501, ABS-CBN's exclusive penthouse restaurant, a copy of Food Magazine's 10th anniversary cookbook, recipe and lecture handouts, and surprise gifts.

Sponsors of the seminar include Del Monte, Fly Ace (Jolly and Good Life), Tefal, and Hotel InterContinental, with special participation of Lifestyle Network.

Call 4152762 or 4152272 local 4640.


WHAT'S ON AT ROBINSONS

Banda ng Bayan visits Robinsons again for the promo of their latest album under Universal Records.

Parokya ni Edgar
26 February (Sunday) 5pm
Orosa Atrium
Robinsons Place Manila

a world to discover

ROBINSONS Malls
www.robinsonsmalls.com

Gourmet Classes with Chef Dennis Hipolito
#137 9th Street corner Balete Drive, New Manila, Quezon City
About Chef Dennis Dean's List graduate of the Culinary Institute of America, Hyde Park, NY/Food Stylist/* Owner of Joconde Cakes/* Took over classes from the Famed Gourmet, Maur Aquino Lichauco in New Manila/*Trained under the tutelage of World Pastry Cup Champion En-Ming Hsu of the Ritz Carlton Chicago (a Four Seasons Hotel), Dan Budd of Park Avenue Café Chicago, Cake Stylist Betty Van Norstrand Food Stylist Delores Custer and other instructors in the Philippines

BAKING CLASSES (Saturdays)
March 4, 2006: CAKES & TORTES I (Must Have Party Desserts) Honey Crunch Cake, Mango Cream Cake, Sacher Torte, Almond Japonaise Torte, Strawberry Mousse Cake P1600
March 11, 2006: CHOCOLATE DESSERTS 2 (Irresistible Decadent Desserts) Liquid Center Chocolate Desserts, Flourless Chocolate Bites, Fudgy and Chewy Brownies, Moist Marbled Chocolate Honey Cake P1600
March 18, 2006: ITALIAN BREADS & DESSERTS (All Time Italian Favorite Treats) Tiramisu, Moist Citrus Cornmeal Cake, Sun dried Tomato Focaccia, Ciabatta, Almond Biscotti -P1600
March 25, 2006: YUMMY YEAST BREADS (Must Have Sweet Breads) Beignets (New Orleans Style Melts in the Mouth Doughnuts), Cottage Cheese and Walnut Bread, Pan de Sal, Quick Sticky Buns with Cream Cheese, Sweet Potato Rolls -P1600

COOKING CLASSES (Wednesdays)
*Featuring a Series of Classes of RECIPES by Famed Gourmet MAUR AQUINO LICHAUCO. TO BE ANNOUNCED LATER THROUGH TEXT OR PLEASE CALL/TEXT FOR DETAILS.
*Call or Text 0917-8486656/0928-7912128 or email us at gourmetpastry@aol.com, for reservations. *Ask for GIRARD or YVETTE.
*CLASSES ARE: 1:00PM-4:30PM, (Limited Seats Available)
*CLASSES INCLUDE: Ingredients, Recipe Hand Outs, and Product Shares.

FOOD and Magnolia Gold Pure & Creamy Butter
present
Top New York food stylist
DELORES CUSTER
in her first ever lecture in the Philippines

Dishing it up with Style

On March 4, Ms. Custer will conduct an intensive class on food styling and food presentation.

Learn all about:
- The secrets of food styling
- Basic food styling techniques
- The latest trends in food styling
- How to choose props
- Use of color and texture for maximum effect
- Shooting food for film and camera
- How to deal with difficult foods
- The tools of the trade

Plus get the chance to watch a live photo shoot!

Ms. Custer teaches at the Culinary Institute of America and New School University in New York. She has styled for the best known international brands. Her clients include Pillsbury, Nabisco, Tupperware, Paul Newman, Time-Life Books, Mrs. Fields, Campbell's, Chocolatier, and Cuisinart. She also develops recipes for food companies and appears frequently on U.S. television to discuss food styling techniques and nutritional concerns.

Take this opportunity to learn from her expertise when she comes to Manila. A one-day class will be held Saturday, March 4, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at Training Halls A & B, 13/F ELJ Communications Center, E. Lopez Avenue, Quezon City.

Who should attend: Chefs, culinary instructors/culinary students, art directors/artists, advertising creative directors, food manufacturers/food distributors, restaurateurs/caterers, marketing and PR directors, photographers/cinematographers, appliance manufacturers, food enthusiasts

Call now for early registration or fax the form below.

Telephone: 415-2272 loc 4640 (Miki Espe)
415-2762 (Lou Gonzales)
Fax no.: 415-1215
E-mail: food@abs.pinoycentral.com
lou_gonzales@abs.pinoycentral.com

Fees: P6,500 for those registering and paying before Feb. 28
P7,500 for those registering and paying after Feb. 28

Fees include snacks, lunch at Restaurant 9501, ABS-CBN's exclusive penthouse restaurant; recipe handouts, lecture handouts, a copy of Food Magazine's 10th Anniversary Cookbook, and other surprise gifts!

In cooperation with:
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Tefal

I am attending the Food Styling Course on March 4

Name:
Contact Number/s:
E-mail address:
Company:
Position:

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Telefon: 913-2527 Telefax 912-1163
Email : junflorendo@yahoo.com

International Cake Exploration Societe
Avelina C. Florendo
1st ASIAN "ICES" HALL OF FAME AWARDEE

1. MAR. 6 - 10 // 8:00AM - 5:00PM - BASIC CAKE DECORATING - (P11,000 for whole course)
P4,000 - MAR. 6 - 7 - Learn 10 diff. kinds of icing flowers, figure piping. Bake & decorate your basket weave cake using boiled icing
P2,750 - MAR. 8 - Bake & decorate your own character birthday cake using star tips, simple borders & icing flowers
P4,500 - MAR. 9 - 10 - Wedding cake assembly: Bake & decorate your own 2 tiered wedding cake using fancy borders, scrolls, strings & icing flowers. NEXT SCHED: APR. 3 - 7
2. MAR. 11, 18 & 25 // 8:00AM - 12:00NN - SUGAR FREE BAKING FOR DIABETIC
P3,000 - MAR. 11 - Flaky (kaliskis) Empanada, Coffee Cheese Cake, Chocolate Nut Pie, Pineapple Flower Cake, Lemonpie. NEXT SCHED: APR. 8
P3,000 - MAR. 18 - Banana, Apple Almond, Bars, Carrot Cake, Choco Nut Cake, Whole Wheat Bread, Raisin Bread. NEXT SCHED: APR. 15
P3,000 - MAR. 25 - Brownie Supreme, Choco Chiffon, Orange Chiffon, Banana Pecan, Cookies, Spiced Raisin Cookies, Chewy Golden Cookies Baking for Diabetics NEXT SCHED: APR. 22
3. MAR. 13 - 17 // 8:00AM - 5:00PM - ADVANCED GUMPASTE & FOREIGN METHOD - (P11,000)
New method on Gumpaste Flowers, Objects, Marzipan, Ribbon Insertion, Finest String Works, Lace Pieces. New Recipe of Fondant Chocolate Fondant. NEXT SCHED: APR. 10 - 14
4. MAR. 15 // 8:00AM - 5:00PM - NEW METHOD ON FONDANT - (P5,000)
Using Lace Mats, New Rolling Pin W/ Designs, Swags & Ribbons, Non-Stick boards w/ Flowers & Veiners & Quilling NEXT SCHED: APR. 12
5. MAR. 20 - 24 // 8:00AM - 5:00PM - BASIC COMMERCIAL BAKING - (P13,000. For whole course)
P2,000 - MAR. 20 - Cakes: plain, mocha, choco, orange chiffon cakes, pound cake, sponge cake, moist choco cake.
P2,600 - MAR. 21 - Cakes & Roll: malacañang roll, chocolate roll, brownies, pineapple upside-down, custard cake, mamon.
P2,850 - MAR. 22 - Breads: pan de sal, dinner rolls, buns, pan de coco, ensaymada, honey bread & white bread.
P2,850 - MAR. 23 - Pies: Buko pie, custard pie, pineapple pie, apple pie, mango pie, caramel tart.
P2,600 - MAR. 24 - Pastries & Cookies: almond tart, San Nicolas cookies, camachile, oatmeal cookies, lengua de gato, coconut macaroons. NEXT SCHED: APR. 17 - 21
6. MAR. 20 - 24 // 8:00AM - 5:00PM - COLD PORCELAIN FLOWER COURSES WITH PORCELAIN RECIPE. (P5,000)
(Each set is lesson covered for one day) - a) Sampaguita, Sunflower, Waling-waling, b) Rose, Catleya, Cymbidium, c) Magnolia, Gerbera, Lilies; d) Open Rose, Hydrangeas, Grapes *COLD PORCELAIN DOLLS (P10,000) by appointment* NEXT SCHED: APR. 17-21
7. MAR. 27 - 31 // 8:00AM - 5:30PM - SPECIAL BAKING - (P14,000. For whole course)
Learn to make 25 Kinds of special cakes from around the world. Each cake has a different icing & decoration.
P3,000 - MAR. 27 - All Sponge Cakes: Nelusko cake, Black Forest cake, Decadence cake, Fan Torte cake, Fruit Torte cake.
P3,000 - MAR. 28 - All Chiffon Cakes: Mango cake, Ube cake, Pistaschio cake, Rocky Road cake, Coffee Crunch cake.
P3,000 - MAR. 29 - All Butter Cakes: Butter Rum cake, Carrot cake, Kahlua cake, Moist Chocolate cake, Special Fruit cake.
P3,000 - MAR. 30 - Cheesecakes: Blueberry, Mango, Tiramisu, Cookies & Cream, New York Cheesecake.
P3,000 - MAR. 31 - Merengues: Sansrival, Solothurn, Queens Torte Braso de Mercedez, Pineapple Merengue Pie
NEXT SCHED: APR. 24 - 28 / FOR SPECIAL SCHEDULE PLS. CALL
8. // 8:00AM - 5:00PM - NEW COURSE & LATEST GELATIN FLOWERS W/O SUGAR - P3,000. BY APPOINTMENT

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#41 Judges St., Rd 3 Inday Subd., Antipolo City

HENY SISON
CULINARY SCHOOL

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

March 1 (Wednesday) 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) BAKING I by: Heny Sison * Super Moist Chocolate Cake with Mocha Filling & Fudge Icing, Pecan Tassies, Macapuno Bars, Crispy Sylvanna, Cream Puff with Caramel Topping, Butterscotch Bars & Sables. P1,500

March 2 (Thursday) 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom A) COOKIE WORKSHOP by: Chef Jacqueline Ang-Po, Pastry Chef of Fleur de Lys Patisserie, dean's list graduate, California Culinary Academy *Chocolate Crinckles, Chocolate Chip Cookies, Lace Oatmeal Cookies, Gingersnaps, Russian Tea Cookies, Lady Fingers, Milk Choco Rum Raisin Cookies, Macadamia Nut Cookies. P2,500

March 2 (Thursday) 9:00 a.m.– 1:00 p.m.(classroom A) JAPANESE COOKING I (All Time Favorite Japanese Recipes)by: Chef Koichi Kondo, licensed cook from Ehime, Japan and food consultant to various Japanese restaurants * Miso Soup, Tempura, Nimono, Yakimono, California Maki, Chilled Soba, Noodles with Nori, Skewered Dumplings with Brown Sauce. P1,700

March 2 (Thursday) 1:30 – 5:00 p.m.(classroom A) JAPANESE COOKING II by: Chef Koichi Kondo * Clam Soup, Miso Soup with Pork and Vegetables, Soup with Rice Cakes, Beef Salad, As-You-Like-It Pancake, Rolled Omelette, Candied Sweet Potatoes & Shrimp Fry. P1,700

March 3-4 (Friday-Saturday) 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) CAKE DECORATING COURSE I by: Heny Sison * Learn the basics of cake decorating: icing, color, star, shell, dots, outline and scallop borders; the rose, figure piping: clowns & booties. Each student will bake & decorate a character birthday cake. Full participation. P4,000

March 6 (Monday) 9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. (classroom A) BASIC CAKES & ICINGS FOR BEGINNERS by: Heny Sison * Butter Cake with Butter Icing, Moist Chocolate Cake with Fudge Icing, Mocha Cake with No-Melt Butter Icing, Lemon Chiffon Cake with Boiled Icing & Sponge Cake with Whipped Cream Icing. P1,500

March 6 (Monday) 2:00 – 5:00 p.m. (classroom A) QUICK BREADS by: Heny Sison *Apple Walnut Cake, Banana Nut Bread, Zucchini Bread, Apple-Cinnamon Muffins, Dark Moist Bran Muffins and Carrot Muffins. P1,500

March 6 (Monday) 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom B) NEW CLASS! JEEPNEY, BUS STOP & CARINDERIA GOURMET FOOD by: Chef Sam de Leoz, Food Consultant, Stylist, Photographer, Caterer, Food demonstrator and Culinary Competition Events Consultant specializing in Basic & Classical Cookery; International & Asian Cuisine. Boost your earnings and attract more clients by learning to prepare carinderia food the gourmet way and gain edge over your competitors. * Chicken Inasal w/ Almond and Red Capsicum Sauce, Menudo Pie, Pancit Puti w/ Chicharon Laman, Batangas Bulalong pang pa Bata w/ Chili Garlic Lime Fish Sauce, Grilled Tilapia Wrapped in banana Leaves w/ Spiced Coconut Sauce, D's Liempo, Grilled Eggplant and Tomato w/ Spicy Vinegar Soy Dip, and Inadobong Binagoongan w/ Ampalaya. Demonstration w/ student participation. P1,700

March 7 (Tuesday) 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon (classroom A) NEW CLASS! HEALTHY GOURMET COOKING: SPA COOKING by: Jacqueline H. Alleje, owner of Rizal Dairy Farm, Swiss-Pinoy restaurateur (Vieux Chalet Swiss restaurant), organic caterer and food consultant (Petra's naturally green, global, gourmet) Techniques of lean cuisine, SPA cooking: Flavors, not calories are the prime ingredients. Learn how to include healthy dishes in your menu planning to satisfy your personal needs and/or new trends in the restaurant industry. This class is suitable for people who wants to learn more about healthy cooking as well as for restaurant and coffee shop owners. Drinks: vegetable juice, smoothies and home made ice teas, appetizers and light bites, vegetable stock based soups, easy to cook grilled and steamed main courses, light desserts. P1,400

March 7 (Tuesday)1:30 – 4:30 p.m. (classroom A) NEW CLASS! HEALTHY GOURMET COOKING COCONUT LOVERS' ALL DAY RECIPES by: Jacqueline H. Alleje Learn about the scientifically proven health benefits of the coconut and coconut oil and how to cook with it. Recipes will cover vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes. *Piña Colada, Fruit Drink, Yogurt Smoothie, Coconut Mayonnaise with Organic Vegetable Sticks, Sesame Shrimp and Chicken Salad, Creamy Zucchini Soup, Gingered Sweet Potatoes in Coconut Sauce, Lamb and Squash Curry, Coco-Chocolate Cream Puffs and Eclair. P1,400

March 8-9 (Wednesday-Thursday) 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) CAKE DECORATING COURSE II by: Heny Sison * Add amazing new skills to your cake decorating – the world of icing flowers, distinctive borders, flower spray & specialty flowers. As a final project you will decorate a basketweave cake filled with cascading flower. Full participation. P4,000

March 11 (Saturday) 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) NEW CLASS! RECIPES FOR SUCCESS IN FOOD CART BUSINESS III by: Chef Vicki Villanueva, from Stars & Bizu, let Chef Vicki share with you her wealth of knowledge and experience of patisseries and restaurant concepts, skills, techniques & operations. Bread Cart, Bakery's best sellers for 2006 *Health Breads, Whole Wheat Pandesal, Herb Foccacia, Ciabatta, Garlic Sticks, Sugar Free, No Fat Whole Wheat Loaf and Carrot Bread. Tips on Start ups, Food cost. Demonstration with student participation. P2,500

March 13 (Monday) 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) NEW CLASS! DIMSUM 3 WORKSHOP by: Chef Katherine Sion, restaurateur (Ding Hao & Fat Kai restaurant), caterer & an expert in Chinese cuisine.* Cantonese Machang, Chinese Gyoza, Beef Siomai, Fried Special Lumpia, Labanos Cake, and Snow White Mochi. P2,500

March 13 (Monday) 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (classroom B) NEW CLASS! PANADERO PANADERIA 1 by: Nestor Magrimbao, Baker, Fema Corporation * Pacencia, Galletas, Otap, Biscocho, Mamon Tostado, Rosquillos. Demonstration w/ student participation. P1,500

March 14 (Tuesday) 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) NEW CLASS! DIMSUM 4 WORKSHOP by: Chef Katherine Sion * Hakaw, Kutchay Dumpling, Crystal Scallop, Crispy Taro Puff, Ham Suy Kok, Triple Colored Rice Cake. P2,500

March 15 (Wednesday) 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) NEW CLASS! SWEET BUT SUGAR FREE CAKES by: Chef Jacqueline Ang Po, Classic Desserts like Strawberry Cheesecake, French Apple Pie Chocolate Cake, Banana Chocolate Muffin, Poppy Seed Cake, Carrot Bars w/ Cream Cheese Icing, Chocolate Walnut Cookies. For people who are conscious of sugar intake. P1,500

March 15 (Wednesday) 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom B) JAPANESE RICE TOPPING by: Chef Koichi Kondo Recipes: Oyako-don (Chicken & Egg on Rice), Gyudon (Beef Bowl), Tendon (Tempura Bowl), Katsu-don (Pork Cutlet Bowl), Soboro-don (Minced Chicken & Egg Bowl), Tori Teriyaki-don (Chicken Teriyaki) P1,700

March 16 (Thursday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m (classroom A) COFFEE CLASS by: Chef Aileen Anastacio Sandoval, owner of Goodies N' Sweet Bakeshop & C'est Si Bon, Dean's list graduate of Culinary at the California Culinary Academy * If you are planning to open a coffee shop this course is for you. Learn the four fundamentals of coffee brewing, home espresso, guide to steaming & foaming. Make fun toppings & garnishes & master the art of coffee making. Recipes: Caffè Latte, Caffè Mocha, Caffè Americano, Cappuccino, Espresso Macchiato & Espresso Con Panna, Almond Coffee Freeze, Icy Rum Coffee Cream, Toffee Coffee, Mudslide Malt, Mocha Rumba, Rocky Road and more! P3,000

March 17 (Friday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) SPECIAL TABLE AND HOME DECOR FLOWER ARRANGEMENT by: Glenn Remorca, floral designer. Table Centerpieces w/ actual demonstration and table setting presentation. Lecture, demonstration and hands-on production. Bring a pair of scissors. P3,000

March 18 (Saturday) 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) CONTROLLING FOOD COST by: Gianella Rodriguez, General Manager of Foodparks by Raintree Graduate of Cornell University & Culinary Institute by America *Course Outline: Menu Costing, Effective Purchasing, Establishing your Ideal Food Cost, Theft, Spoilage & Accidental Loss & Inventory Management P2,000

March 20 (Monday) 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (classroom A) BROWNIES & BARS by: Heny Sison * Chewy Moist Brownies, Carrot Cake Bars with Cream Cheese Icing, Lemon Cheesecake Bars, Brownies with Caramel Center & Butterscotch Bars P1,500

March 20 (Monday) 1:30 – 5:00 p.m. (classroom A) FAVORITE PASTA DISHES by: Chef Jill Sandique, Food Consultant, Food Stylist, Blue Ribbon graduate at Peter Kump's New York Cooking School *Learn how to cook your favorite pasta dishes the easy way. Sauces to be taught in the class are the flg: Puttanesca, Carbonara, Pomodoro, Alfredo, Bolognese and Primavera plus bonus recipes . P1,700

March 20 (Monday) 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (classroom B) NEW CLASS! PANADERO PANADERIA 2 by: Nestor Magrimbao *Kabayan, Pianono, Ilang-Ilang, Ensaymada, Cheese Bread, Piña Roll, Spanish Bread, Pandesal, Tasty Bread. Demonstration w/ student participation. P1,500

March 21 (Tuesday) 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) NEW CLASS! PHILIPPINE REGIONAL CUISINE PART 1 by: Chef Sam de Leoz Taste and experience the flavors of our very own popular Filipino regional delicacies. Recipes: Ilocandia Pinapaitan, Northern Dinuguan, La Paz Batchoy, Albay Pinangat, Bicol Express, Railway Sizzling Sisig. Demonstration w/ student participation. P1,500

March 22 (Wednesday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) INTRODUCTION TO JAPANESE COOKING by: Chef Koichi Kondo * Learn all-time favorites Japanese dishes applicable to home & professional cooking such as: Sushi, Sashimi, Sukiyaki, Miso Soup, Tempura, Teriyaki, Udon Noodles in Clay Pot, Chicken Teriyaki & Japanese Fried Rice. P2,500

March 23 (Thursday) 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) CREPE WORKSHOPby: Chef Jill Sandique *Learn the techniques of crepe making in this full participation class. On the Menu: Crepe Suzette, Strawberry Crepe, Mango-Pandan, Crepe a la Mode, Spinach Roulade, Beggars Purses and Chicken Mushroom Crepe. P2,500

March 24 (Friday) 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) THE BEST OF THE BEST SERIES II by: Chef Vicky Villanueva * Learn the Chef's secret. More tips and proven techniques. Recipes: Softest Ensaymada, Savory Toppings, Adobo Flakes, Meat Floss, Sweet Toppings, Classic, Chocolate, Praline and Ube, Queso de Bola Cheese Rolls, Crisp Crusted Light Waffles, Fool Proof Cinnamon Rolls, Coffee, Chocolate and Caramel Eclairs, Cream Puff and Bunuelos. P2,500

March 25 (Saturday) 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (classroom A) NEW CLASS! RECIPES FOR SUCCESS IN FOOD CART BUSINESS IV by:Chef Vicki Villanueva Who let the Dogs Out! Start your own HOTDOG CART! Chef Vicki will guide you thru conceptualization, finding the right location, marketing and recommended suppliers. From this class you will learn the Art of Making a Sausage, Bake your Hotdog Buns, Corn Meal Dogs, Waffle Dog and the Art of a Sandwich; Cheesedog and Doggie Wrap, toppings Chili con Carne and make your own Catsup and Cheese Sauce. P2,500

March 27 (Monday) 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (classroom A) SECRETS NO MORE! by: Heny Sison * Decadent Chocolate Cake with Fudge Icing & Caramel Sauce, Lemon Torte, Ensaymada, Almond Sansrival, Strawberry Shortcake & Ube Cake. P3,000

March 30 (Thursday) 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) BASIC BREAD BAKING WORKSHOP I by: Heny Sison *Learn the variety of breads using basic sweet dough. Recipes: Pan de Sal, Cinnamon Roll, Adobo Roll, Cheese Roll & Dinner Roll. P2,500

March 30 (Thursday) 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom B) NEW CLASS! CHOCOLATE FOUNTAIN CLASS by: Chef Vicki Villanueva Learn and party in the class! Attention to all Caterers and Party givers. Rev up your profits and create a stunning buffet in your next event. Chef Vicki will demonstrate and assemble 3 versions of chocolate center pieces-Homemade Choco fountain, fondue and Real Choco fountain. Learn to package theme menus for your clients black forest, Rocky Road, Toffee and more. Bake the fudgiest brownies, Pound Cake and Mini Choco Chip Cookies. You will learn to set up w/ fruits, graham crackers, etc. P2,700

March 31 (Friday) 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom A) NEW CLASS! HIGH-YIELD CATERING DISHES MODULE 3 by: Chef Sam de Leoz Discover high-yield dish preparations for higher profit margins. * Calamares w/ Saffron Aioli Dip, Fish n Chips w/ Sauce Tartare, Mushroom Combo Consommé, Ding How Rice, Roast Pork w/ Apple Szechwan Glaze, and Jung Pao Chicken P1,500

We are now accepting enrollees for the June batch of ESSENTIAL COOKING SERIES (June 29 – September 7, 2006 Classes are held every Thursdays & Fridays) ESSENTIAL BAKING AND PASTRY SERIES (June 3 – December 2, 2006. Classes are held every Saturdays).

TUITION FEE includes ingredients. Reservation is required. WEDDING & BIRTHDAY CAKE orders by appointment only. We sell Cake Decorating, Confectionery and Baking Supplies.

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INQUIRER CLASSIFIEDS

CREBA

33rd Induction Ceremonies

A special supplement

SPECIAL NEWSPAPER SUPPLEMENT Philippine Copyright 2002 by the Philippine Daily Inquirer Free with Inquirer THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2006

An industry on the upswing, challenges greet new Creba officers

By Joel V. Nigos

OFFICERS OF THE CREBA International Foundation Inc. pose for posterity during the housing fair it held in London in July 2005

A REAL ESTATE INDUSTRY ON THE upswing, albeit tempered by strict regulations and the country's economic situation, greet the new set of officers this year of the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Association as they take their oath in the induction ceremonies to be held today at the posh Manila Polo Club at Forbes Park in Makati City.

No less than House Speaker Jose de Venecia will induct the new Creba board of directors and committee chairs as well as the board and committee chairs of the Creba International Foundation Inc. (CIFI). The induction ceremonies will be followed by incoming national president Pedro C. Tario giving his inaugural speech. It will be keynoted also by Speaker De Venecia.

The Creba induction is always a big event in the industry. "It's when all sectors, government and private, involve in real estate gather together. It's when the old gives way to the new—a time when we salute the outgoing officers for their job well done and wish the incoming for their tasks ahead," shares Purita Soliven, president of CIFI.

As in previous induction ceremonies, heads of various housing agencies such as the National Housing Authority, Home Development Mutual Fund or Pag-Ibig, Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board, Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, are expected to grace the event. Parañaque Rep. Eduardo C. Zialcita, a former executive vice president of Creba before he became congressman, and currently the chair of the House committee on housing and urban development, will also be present at the occasion to give his support.

Challenges ahead

Tario says that they will have their hands full as they take on the industry's challenges ahead.

"The industry is moving but because of too many restrictions and strict regulations, we believe the growth is not maximized. There are a lot of opportunities lost," he laments.

He adds that Creba's current advocacies will focus on how to deal with these challenges to spur growth. "We'll do what needs to be done. And we'll always be at the forefront to help in our economic development."

Some of the things Creba will look into, Tario says, are the law which intervenes to the right to buy property especially by foreign investors, the conversion of agricultural lands to residential, the taxes imposed by the government, the interest rates being charged by Pag-Ibig to its members, among others.

Creba is advocating that conversion of agricultural lands to develop these into subdivisions should be easier. This is in line with their vision to decongest Metro Manila by creating new towns. New towns and communities, he explains, would not be created if agricultural lands' conversion to residential is not approved by the government.

"Banks now have reduced their interest rates for housing loans to as low as 10 to 10.5 percent per annum. It's even lower than Pag-Ibig which is a social fund. Pag-Ibig fund is the members' money that's why we believe it should be more liberal to its members, in terms of interest rates and its service."

Says Tario: "About 65 industries are involved in real estate or in the performance of housing construction. The ripple effects of the industry spans and benefits many. Government regulations should not be prohibitive in the performance of our business."

As Tario sums it all up, Creba's thrust this year is to continue to be pro-active in taking on the opportunities and to become an instrument of economic development across all regions in the country.

"The real estate industry is on the upswing that's why we wanted to take on the opportunity. We feel that with the present situation—the government regulations, the current laws, the overall economic situation—we're still not getting the most of it. But with the cooperation of all the sectors involve in the industry and the assistance of the government, we know we will get in there in due time," Tario says.

Creba Int'l Foundation

The Creba International Foundation Inc. was organized by Creba in 2008 to respond to the housing needs of millions of overseas Filipino workers in over 180 countries abroad, particularly in the Middle East, Hong Kong, Singapore, Japan, Korea, Canada, Italy, Taiwan, United Kingdom and the US.

It also serves Filipino expatriates and foreign investors by assisting them in locating appropriate real estate investment opportunities in the Philippines.

The foundation operates as a corporation, with a network of competent brokers and realty marketing practitioners abroad, which serves as the marketing, advertising and promotions arm of the foundation using online communication, printed media and other similar publications. It also sets the criteria for the accreditation of developers-sellers and verifies their credibility, viability, integrity and financial stability.

The developer derives tremendous benefits from the services of the foundation and its international chapters because he saves a lot of resources and efforts in offering his real estate projects and services abroad. The cost of putting up an overseas realty marketing office alone and maintaining a

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MESSAGES

Republic of the Philippines
Malacañan Palace
Manila

Greetings to the officers and members of the **Chamber of Real Estate and Builders' Associations, Inc. (CREBA) and CREBA International Foundation, Inc. (CIFI)** as you hold your Induction Ceremony.

Providing a suitable home and community for one's family remains one of the most cherished dreams of every Filipino. The government and the private sector are committed to the realization of this dream by way of shelter programs ranging from low-cost and subsidized housing to medium rise projects in urban and rural areas.

I hope that the new leaders of the CREBA whom you are inducting today will reaffirm your organization's partnership with the government and all stakeholders in this area. Real estate development, particularly the provision of more houses to the greater majority of our people, should be vibrant this year and in the years to follow. And I pin my hopes on the CREBA for this vision to be realized.

Congratulations to your new set of officers and more power to all of you! *Mabuhay!*

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President

* * *

Republic of the Philippines
Office of the Vice-President
Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council

My warmest greetings to the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders' Associations, Inc. (CREBA) and CREBA International Foundation, Inc (CIFI) on the induction of your new set of officers for the year 2006.

CREBA remains a solid partner to the government in attaining the goals of the shelter sector. Last year this partnership has made a significant headway in providing decent homes to our countrymen, especially through the implementation of the LGU-private sector housing.

Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council has been able to rely on the inputs of CREBA in formulating the government's housing policies and introducing necessary reforms. We will continue to be open to new ideas and suggestions, and to work closely with you in keeping the housing industry vibrant, dynamic and responsive to the country's needs.

Congratulations to the new officers of CREBA and CIFI as you formally begin your term. I am fully confident that under your leadership, these institutions will continue to grow as strong and dependable participants in the great endeavor of building better homes and communities for the Filipino family.

Mabuhay kayo!

VICE PRESIDENT NOLI DE CASTRO
Chairman, HUDCC

* * *

Message
Mr. Pedro C. Tario
National President

Decent shelters can empower a nation. This is one truth that keeps CREBA united and steadfast for the sake of the present and future generations. Yet another truth that has dawned to us for the past years is that helping the government resolve the housing problem has become a long and arduous struggle for CREBA.

And so, while it can take pride in what it has done for three decades, CREBA continues to train its attention on the challenges of the real estate industry, pushing for reforms, drawing up proposals and mustering might to galvanize plans into action. The new administration of Creba is faced with the challenges of the past and new ones as well. Facing challenges has been Creba's cup of tea and will remain so.

CREBA's dream is to see the dawning of the age of shelter security for all Filipinos. The vision saw a ray of light thirty years ago. It has been an uphill battle for CREBA, yet it remains undaunted in pursuing cooperative, creative and viable endeavors to make it easier for every Filipino family to own a home.

PEDRO C. TARIO
National President, CREBA, Inc.

Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

My warmest greetings to the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders' Associations, Inc. (CREBA) and CREBA International Foundation, Inc. (CIFI), as you hold your Induction Ceremony on February 23, 2006.

I commend CREBA and CIFI for your commitment to promote and develop the housing industry and for taking part in the goverments' program to provide housing opportunities for the low to middle-income families.

Your organizations have vital roles in stimulating growth and productivity in your industry. I also note your success in capturing markets abroad for numerous Philippine developments, proving our competitiveness and viability in the global field.

We in the House of Representatives are doing our share by continuously pushing for the passage of measures such as the Real Estate Service Act and the Omnibus Housing and Development Act to further streamline and aid the progress of the real estate sector, with due regard to stakeholders' interests.

My congratulations to your new set of officers. I look forward to the further contributions of CREBA and CIFI to our common pursuit of sustained economic growth and long-term peace.

Mabuhay!

JOSE C. DE VENECIA
Speaker, House of Representatives

* * *

Message
Atty. Manuel M. Serrano
Chairman of the Board

The year 2006 marks CREBA's 33th anniversary. Looking back, it gratifies us to note that in our humble way, we have contributed our share in helping build this nation through our chosen endeavor – housing and community development.

Unlike other nations, however, our problems here seem to get bigger and graver over the years. While the private sector, for its part has tried its best in partnering with government, a genuine and meaningful partnership with government appears elusive.

CREBA therefore must do a lot more than what it is merely expected. Its initiatives and advocacies for reforms should transcend the real estate industry. It seems indispensable that CREBA must also concern itself not just with the economic aspect but also the social and political framework to which our industry is inseparably linked.

The following should be addressed: population control; peace and order; poverty alleviation; corruption; rationalization of land reform and land use; global competitiveness; charter change through a constituent assembly towards opening to foreigners land ownership, operation of public utilities and exploitation of our natural resources, subject to certain conditions, that we may uplift the lot of the poor and hopefully establish a strong middle class; the switch from presidential to parliamentary form to make government more responsive; amendment of the Central Bank charter to make it development oriented; and other related economic reforms.

(Sgd.) **MANUEL M. SERRANO**
Chairman, CREBA, Inc.

* * *

Message
Purita R. Soliven
President, CREBA International
Foundation, Inc. (CIFI)

I extend my warmest greeting to the men and women at the helm of CREBA and CIFI.

Having reached this far is the best testimony to the strength, success, and vitality of CREBA and its continuing relevance to the industry in particular and the society at large.

May I take advantage of this opportunity to reaffirm CIFI's adherence and commitment to CREBA's vision, ideals, goals and objectives, which we try to bring to a global perspective.

When CIFI was created in 2003, CREBA had in its mind a strong arm that will be able to open opportunities for local industry players at the international arena, break grounds for Philippine real estate reach Filipinos anywhere in the world, and be instrumental in the promotion of the archipelago as a sound haven for global investment.

Now, with several chapters and after more than a few endeavors abroad, it is comforting to know that we are traversing the right track.

May this year and the coming years prove fruitful for CREBA and CIFI.

Mabuhay po tayong lahat!

PURITA R. SOLIVEN
President, CIFI

EDITHA L. MANANSALA
VP for Public Relations - CREBA, Inc.
VP for Asia, CIFI

My warmest greetings to all!

The global marketplace had changed greatly through the years. The passive way of marketing real estate is passé. The playing field is tougher and one needs to form strategies to conform to this change. In this regard, CREBA, Inc., led by its president, Pedro C. Tario, has extended its reach in the global stage through CREBA International Foundation Inc.'s collaboration with international organizations such as FIABCI. These partnerships aims to bring the Philippines' best real estate developments to world attention and make these projects easily accessible to OFWs and foreign investors through reputable and carefully established global networks. CREBA, Inc. also plans to further strengthen its community relations through various activities including "CARE" or the CREBA Academy on Real Estate which is a division of the CREBA Academe and is already existing through the consortium with De La Salle-CSB. At the same time, this supplement which is a project of the Office of Public Relations aims to present consumers a bird's eye view of where CREBA and the Philippine real estate industry is and where it is going.

Mabuhay!

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PROGRAMME

hosted by CREBA International Foundation, Inc. (CIFI)

PART I	**Registration & Cocktails**	Ms. Editha L. Manansala Mr. Eugene C. Yu Vice Presidents, CIFI
	EXHIBIT DINNER and DANCE	

- -

PART II **Opening Ceremonies**

Entry of Colors..	PMI CADETS
Invocation..	MR. DOMINGO H. YAP Director
National Anthem & CREBA Hymn................	MS. LYN MACEDA Member
Call to Order..	DR. JAIME A. CURA Outgoing President
Welcome Remarks & Acknowledgement of Guests	MR. RENATO P. DRAGON VP for External Affairs

- -

PART III **Turnover Ceremonies**

Valedictory Speech & Awards of Appreciation..	DR. JAIME A. CURA
Induction of CREBA Board & Committee Chairs.... Induction of CIFI Board & Committee Chairs	**HON. JOSE C. DE VENECIA** House Speaker
Inaugural Speech	MR. PEDRO C. TARIO Incoming President

- -

PART IV **Speech**

Introduction of Guest of Honor & Speaker.....	CONG. EDUARDO C. ZIALCITA Chairman, Committee on Housing & Urban Dev't. 1st District, Parañaque City
Speech of the Guest of Honor & Speaker.......	**HON. JOSE C. DE VENECIA**

- -

PART V

Closing Remarks	MS. PURITA R. SOLIVEN CIFI President

TECHIE P. BAUTISTA
Master of Ceremonies

Fellowship: DANCING * SINGING
Emcees
Asernio M. de Guzman / Avelina P. Acuña / Rosemarie C. Basa

A toast for a decade of success

SLRDI Chair and CEO Exequiel D. Robles (right) congratulates OPMC President Eduardo U. Tirona during the 10th OPMC Anniversary Celebration at the Shangri-La Manila on October 2005.

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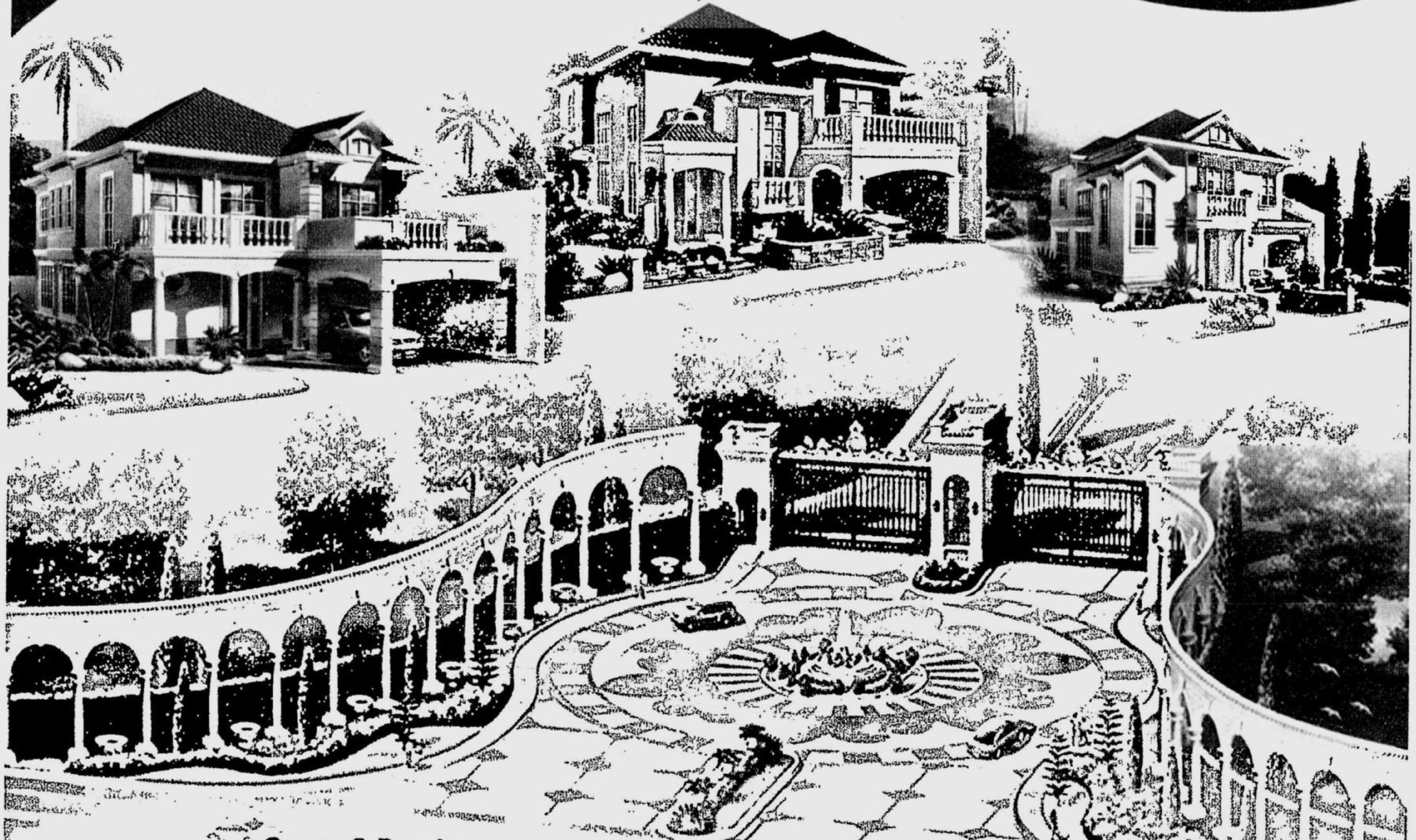

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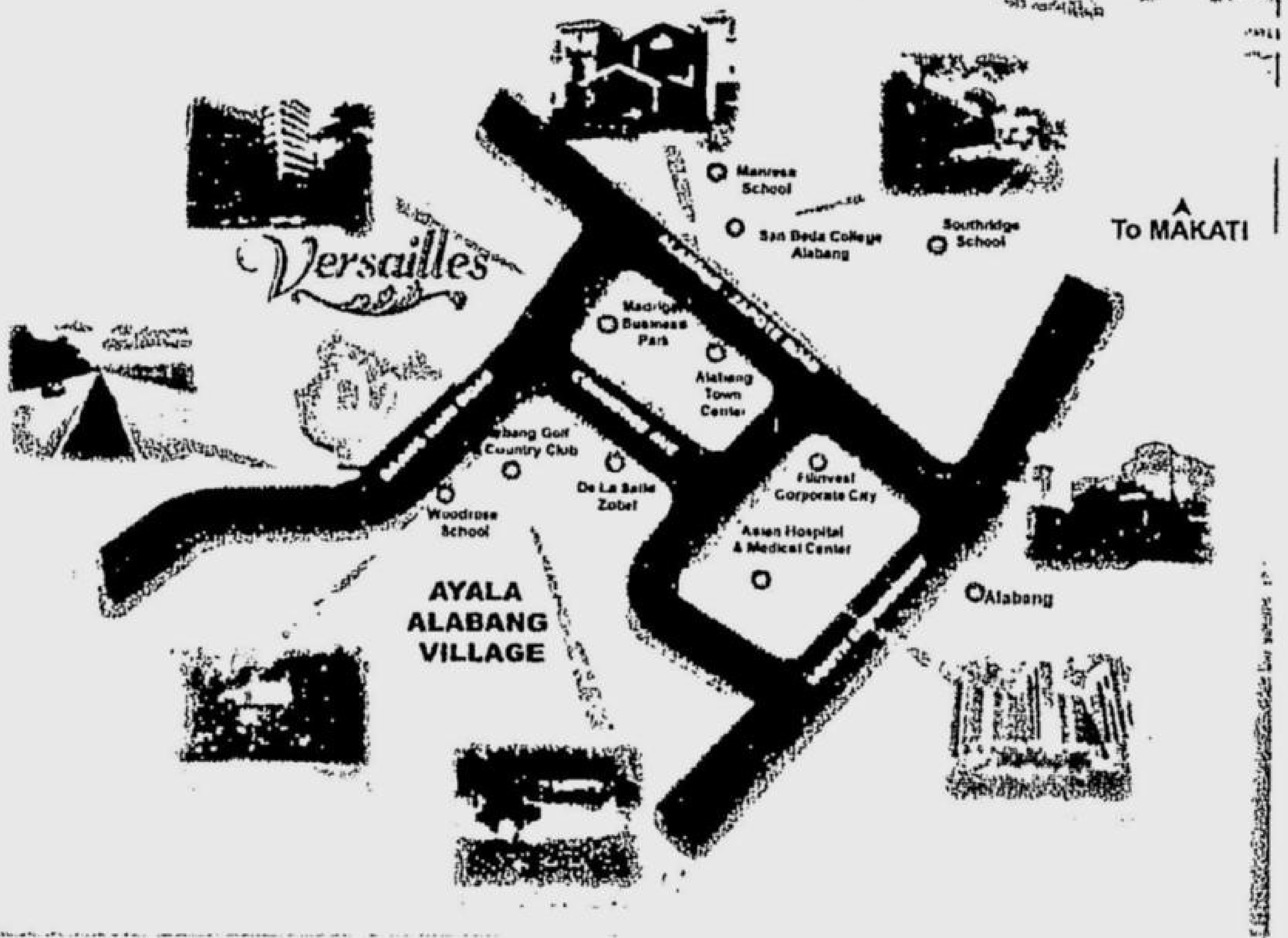
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Director

EUGENE C. YU
Director

An industry on the upswing...

From page 1

marketing and promotion staff can be prohibitive. Partnering with CIFI can gain for him long-term and profitable marketing mileage.

Int'l housing fairs

Last year, the foundation was able to hold successful housing fairs in the US, United Kingdom and Japan.

Ten developers participated in the "20th LA Exposition, Auto Show and Home Show" in September organized by US-based newspaperman Oscar Encarnacion through his newspaper California Examiner. A property expo was also held by the same group at the Golden Nugget Hotel in Las Vegas.

In London, where the first such fair was held, eight Philippine developers were represented in the "Barrio Fiesta sa London," an annual Filipino community activity at Lampton Park, Hounslow in central London where an average of 80,000 visitors flock every year.

Another fair was held in Tokyo, Japan in November to target the more than 175,000 Filipino workers there.

"Most Filipinos who have stayed in the US for some time would like to go back to the Philippines when they retire. Same is true for Filipino workers who have been working in London. Those in Japan are not really planning to stay there for good, they would eventually go home as soon as they have enough savings," says Soliven backing the logic of holding international housing fairs.

Techie Bautista, one of the foundation's vice president's, for her part says that there is a big market out there for overseas Filipinos, estimated to number around 10 million. In addition, she says, they are also hoping to get the expatriates and foreign investors as well as foreign retirees to invest in the Philippines through the properties they're selling.

To tap another market, another fair is scheduled on Feb. 25-26, 2006 in Hong Kong to look after the housing needs of the territory's Filipino domestic helpers and professionals. Another one will be held by September or October in Los Angeles and by December in Hawaii coinciding with the state's centennial year.

Creba International works by establishing business and marketing linkages with international brokers in other countries. It also aims to expand its technical knowledge with the help of this network.

"The housing fairs serve another purpose. We're able to network with overseas Filipino by forming chapters there," says Soliven. Creba now has two international chapters, in Los Angeles and London, a product of the fairs held there.

Housing industry advocate

Creba was established in October 1973 to unite the different disciplines of the real estate and housing industry as developments in the sector took a frenzied pace and developers and homebuyers met various problems and obstacles.

Throughout the years, it has become the voice of the sector in the government and which the government turns on to with regard to issues that affect real estate and housing.

It has actively participated and vigorously pushed for the interest of the industry in the passage of legislation, establishment of support institutions and adoption of rules and regulations for the sector. Among these advocacies are the creation of various government agencies such as the National Housing Authority, the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board, the Pag-Ibig Fund, the National Home Mortgage and Finance Corp. and its own Creba Social Housing Foundation Inc. It has pushed for the construction of water mains throughout Manila which was undertaken by the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System in 1975. It has also pushed for the passage of laws such as BP 220 (Social Housing Act) and PD 957 (Subdivision and Condominium Buyers' Protection Decree).

Its current advocacies include the fixing of interest rates for housing loans, the creation of the Department of Housing which will serve as the highest policy-making body, planning and governing body for human settlements, the creation of local housing boards, and the Centralized Home Financing Program (CHFP).

Creba has established its own Business Against Graft and Corruption (Bagcor), a group within Creba, which seeks to reduce bureaucratic red tape and graft and corruption in government. It has also opposed the imposition of E-VAT in all real estate transactions.

Creba now has over 43 chapters located in key cities all over the country.

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> *– Vice President and HUDCC Chairman Noli "Kabayan" De Castro*

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- Alternative compliance schemes to meet 20% balanced requirement such as: socialized housing bonds; accreditation of NGOs/Foundations involved in community development; and reduced investment in socialized housing bonds (for discussion with DOJ)
- Adjustments in the application of creditable withholding tax
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- Continuing HGC review of guaranty programs for housing

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Focusing world attention on Philippine real estate

By Editha L. Manansala
CREBA VP – Public Relations

Developers in the Philippines are buoyant about the latest news that more money from the Overseas Filipino workers or OFWs are coming in this year. Last year, they remitted around US$8.5 billion to the country, and this figure covers only those remittances that went through banks and other formal channels.

This means that investments in real estate will continue to grow, with the OFWs making up the biggest middle-end market in the Philippines.

Most of these remittances come from the United States, Europe, the Middle East, Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, Malaysia and Thailand. The exodus of Filipino workers abroad is expected to grow at 12.5 percent yearly.

Studies show that 30 percent of the net income of OFWs in general goes to the purchase of a home, home repairs, renovation, or house rental. OFW homebuyers also post a high rate of monthly amortization. This can be explained by the fact that owning a home and being able to send their children to good schools are the most common goals of those who choose to leave their families to work abroad. Statistics show that real estate and education are among the top investment choices of Filipino workers abroad.

The OFW market reportedly contributes an average of 20 to 25 percent to the industry, prompting developers, new entrepreneurs and investors to set their sights on, and expand their investments in, real estate business. The challenge that faces everyone is to explore all means of providing the OFWs with the best real estate investments that they can have.

The market situation calls for efficient information/ communication, marketing and sales facilities that will enable the OFWs to make the right choices. It is a mandate for real estate developers and marketers to guarantee that local and overseas buyers will get a good return on their investment in terms of quality and integrity of the residential projects that are offered to them.

Although the number of property and real estate developments continues to go up, industry analysts are convinced that projects designed for the overseas market should be bolstered further from 15 to 20 percent. These projects make up the whole spectrum — residential and condominium developments, commercial and industrial estates, leisure and lifestyle investments, mixed-use commercial -residential projects and vacation or leisure farms.

Another promising market is the retirement industry. The Philippines has a good share of locations that make for ' safe havens ' – prime lands that can be transformed into secure and profitable residential, commercial, resort and eco-tourism developments. More than 7,000 islands consisting of plains, mountainous landscapes, pristine shores and idyllic villages waiting to be explored.

The development of more retirement communities, like any other real estate projects, has its multiplier effects such as providing jobs and generating foreign investments.

CREBA & FIABCI

The bullish overseas market has prompted the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Associations International, Inc. (CREBA Inc.) to link arms with the Philippine Chapter of the International Real Estate Federation or FIABCI. The partnership aims to bring the Philippines' best real estate developments to world attention and make these projects easily accessible to OFWs and foreign investors through reputable and carefully established global networks.

The cost of setting up and maintaining property marketing offices abroad can be prohibitive. CREBA and FIABCi, however, have devised practical, cost effective and convenient systems of promoting and marketing real estate projects abroad for qualified members. They can provide direct access to reliable marketing arms or companies in different locations abroad and facilitate the exchange of market information and sales transactions.

Property ownership in RP

Foreigners are entitled to own condominium units in the Philippines provided that the land where the condo project is built belongs to a corporation where 60 percent of the owners are Filipinos. They can also own houses but not the land where they stand.

Generally, only individual Filipino citizens and corporations where Filipinos own 60 percent of the capital stock have the right to own land in the country. However, a foreigner can own land if he is a former Filipino citizen who was born in the Philippines. Former Filipino citizens are allowed to acquire a maximum area of 5,000 square meters of urban land or three hectares of agricultural land.

Many people from other countries, especially in places where there are long stretches of winter, find the Philippines a retirement haven. Thus, the Philippine Retirement Authority has turned more aggressive than ever in performing its mandate of inviting foreign nationals and former Filipino citizens to invest, reside and eventually retire in the Philippines.

The aging population has steadily been growing particular in developed countries like the Unites States, Japan, Germany, Italy, France and United Kingdom.

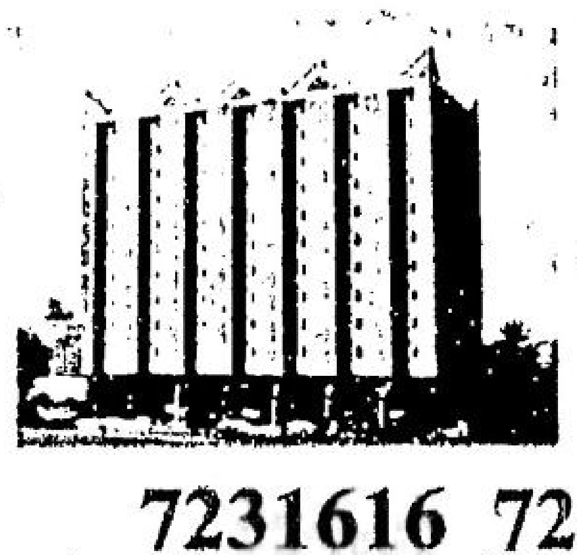
According to the Department of Tourism, there is a 13 percent growth in tourism for the first 10 months of 2005. Dr. Nelson Collantes, general manager of the Philippine Retirement Authority attributes this partly to the increase in the number of enrollees in PRA's Special Resident Retiree's Visa program.

CREBA International Foundation, Inc. and FIABCI Philippines are eyeing more opportunities in this area and mapping out ways by which developers can forge alliances with the service sector (such as the entertainment industry and health providers) to make retirement villages in the country more attractive to foreigners.

As VP for Asia of CREBA International Foundation, Inc., I am embarking on a working tour of several Asian countries to carry out an alliance building task for our developers.

Filipino retirees who are living abroad are also reported to be nurturing a renewed interest in owning residential or retirement properties in their homeland. One local developer reportedly sold some US $7 million worth of properties to Filipinos living in the United States.

Middle-end and high-end developers will do well in aligning themselves with institutions like CREBA Inc. in positioning their projects towards the growing OFW and foreign retirees market.



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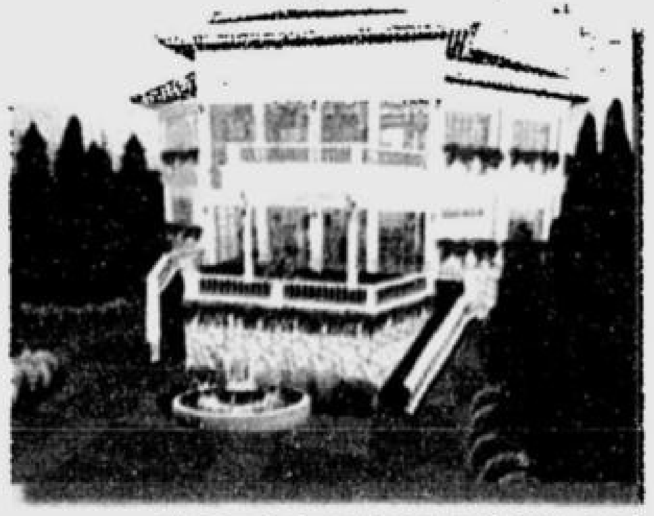

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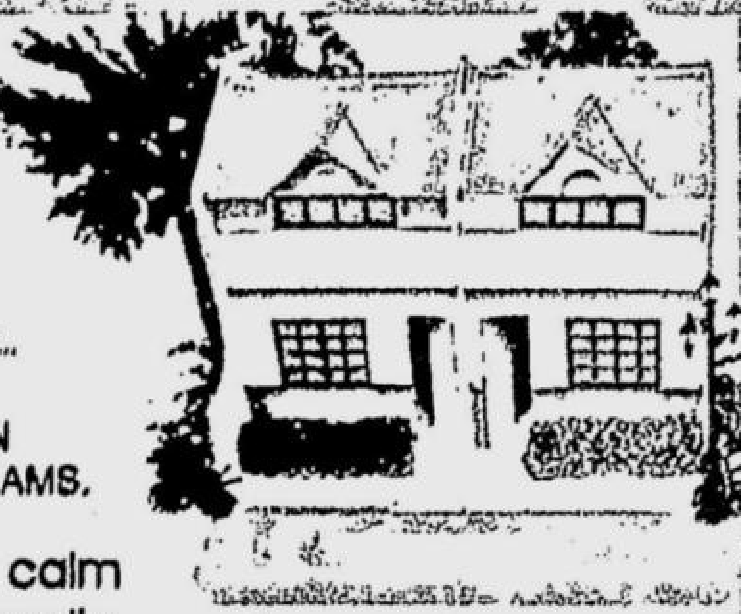

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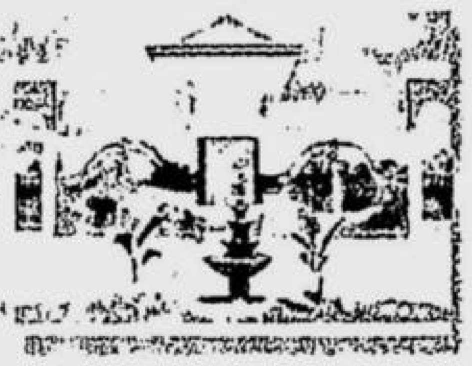

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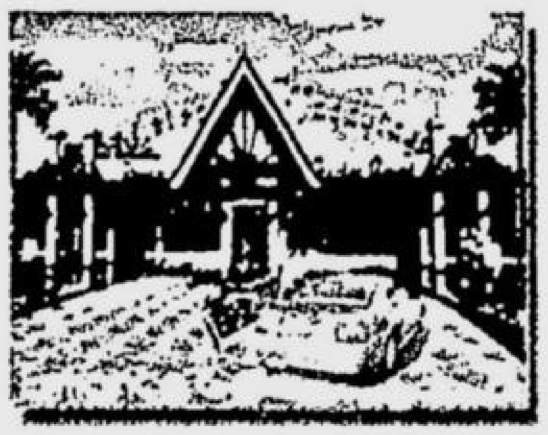

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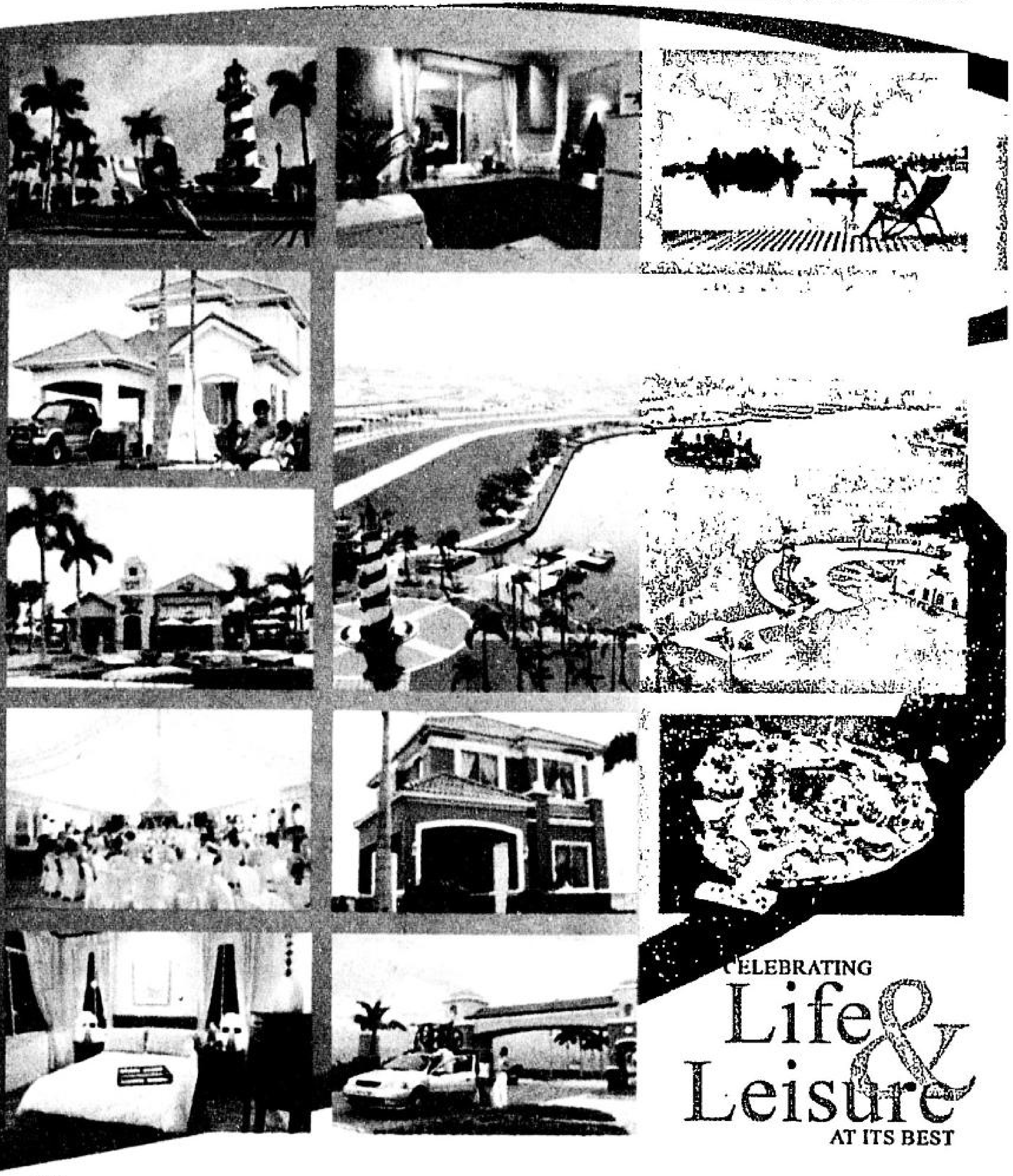

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September 25, 2004

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Benjamin 9 Northville Subd.
(Tangle Mexico Pampanga)

Benjamin Village 8
(Igay SJDM, Bulacan)

Hardin ng Sto. Niño Memorial Park
(Sto. Niño Sapang Palay SJDM, Bulacan)

Head Office:
No. 41 5th St. (Boni Serrano)
Benjamin Bldg. (betw. 6th & 7th Ave.)
Grace Park Caloocan City, 1400
Philippines
Tel. Nos.: 363-19-68; 365-35-74
Mobile Nos.: (0919) 8264346;
(0917) 7856969

Branches:

Bulacan:
Fronting No. 64 Brgy. Sto. Niño
San Jose Del Monte Bulacan

Pampanga:
Stall No. 23 & 40 Dau Plaza
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BENJAMIN CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT, INC.

(SINCE 1979)

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- As for Peace & Order and Security, SBFZ is a gated community with almost 0% criminality.

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- Barbecue grill
- Convenient store
- Barber shop and Salon
- Restaurant
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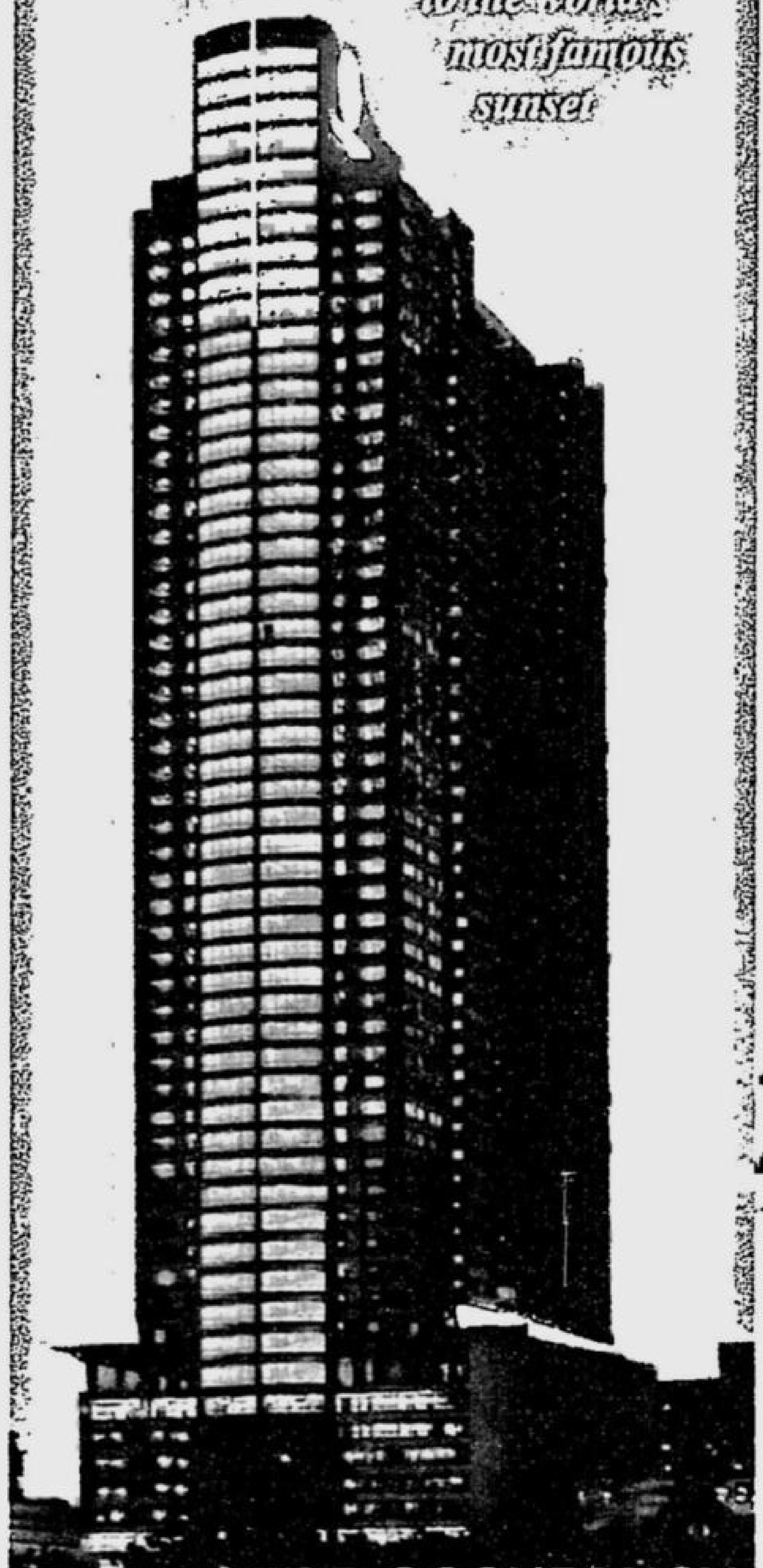

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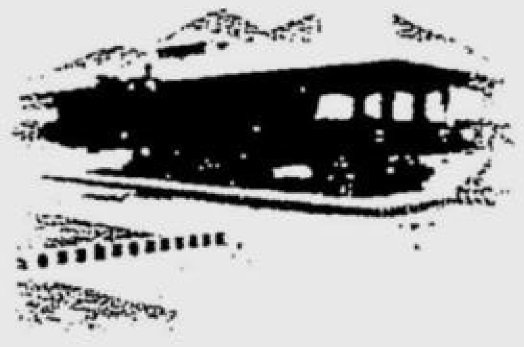

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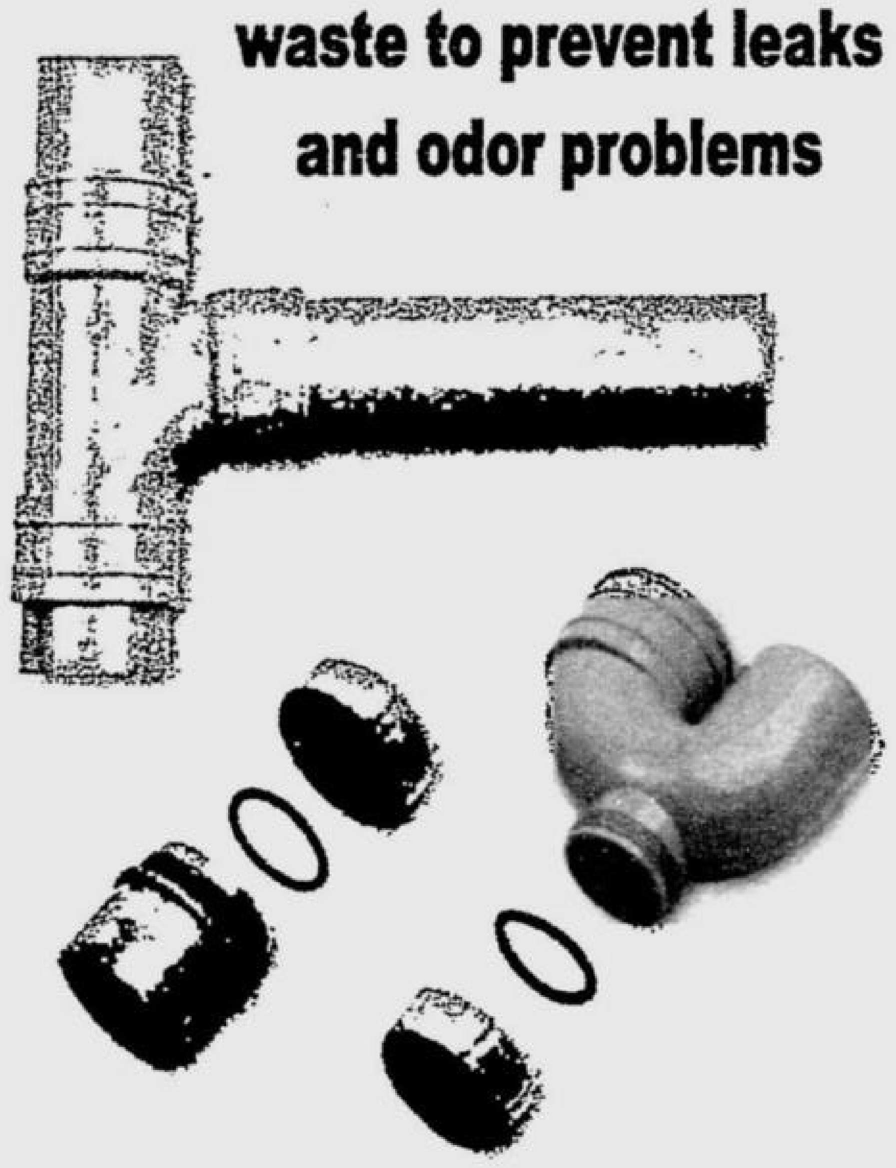

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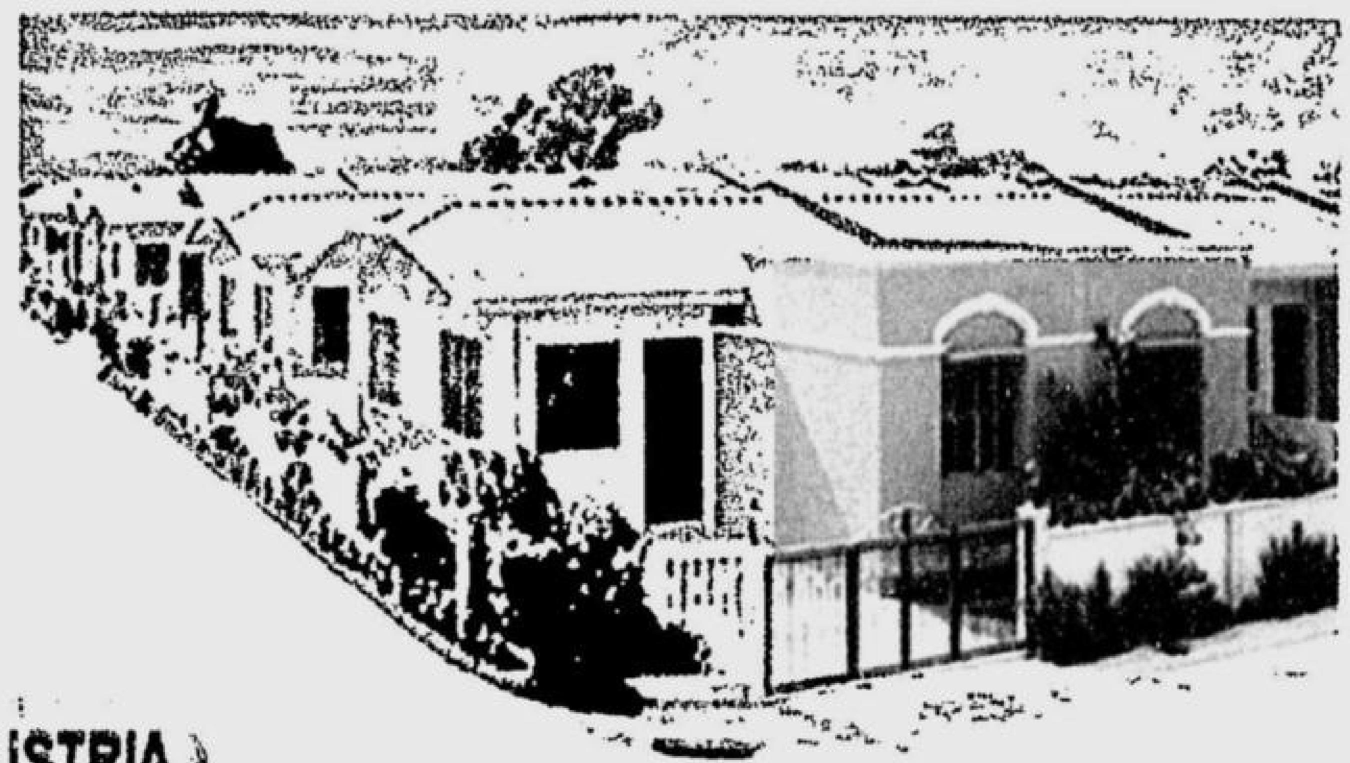
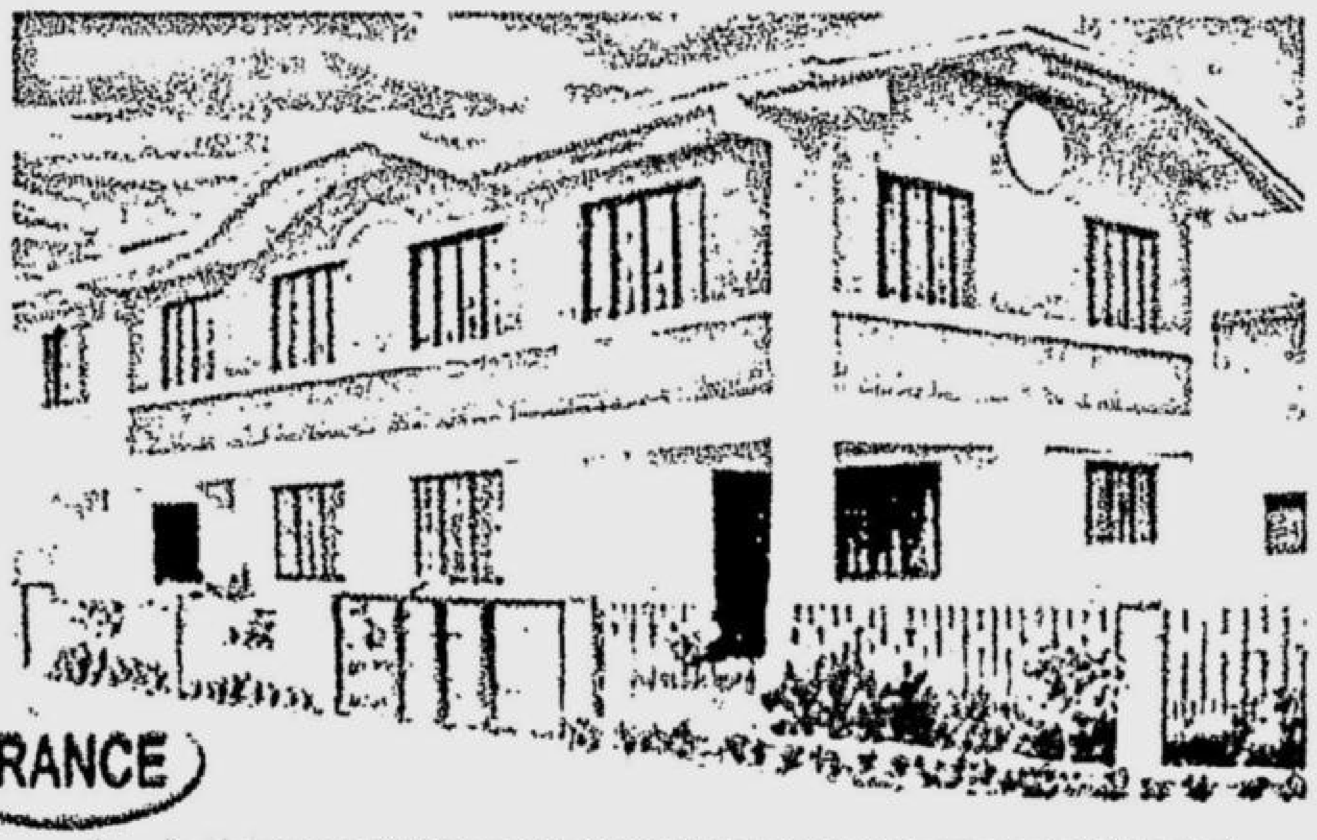


AUSTRIA

₱1M · 3 BR · 1 T&B · LOT AREA: 72 sq.m.
TOTAL IMPROVED AREA: 66 sq.m.



FRANCE

₱1.7M · 3 BR · 2 T&B · LOT AREA: 72 sq.m.
TOTAL IMPROVED AREA: 104.00 sq.m.

MEADOWOOD
ROYALE TOWNHOMES

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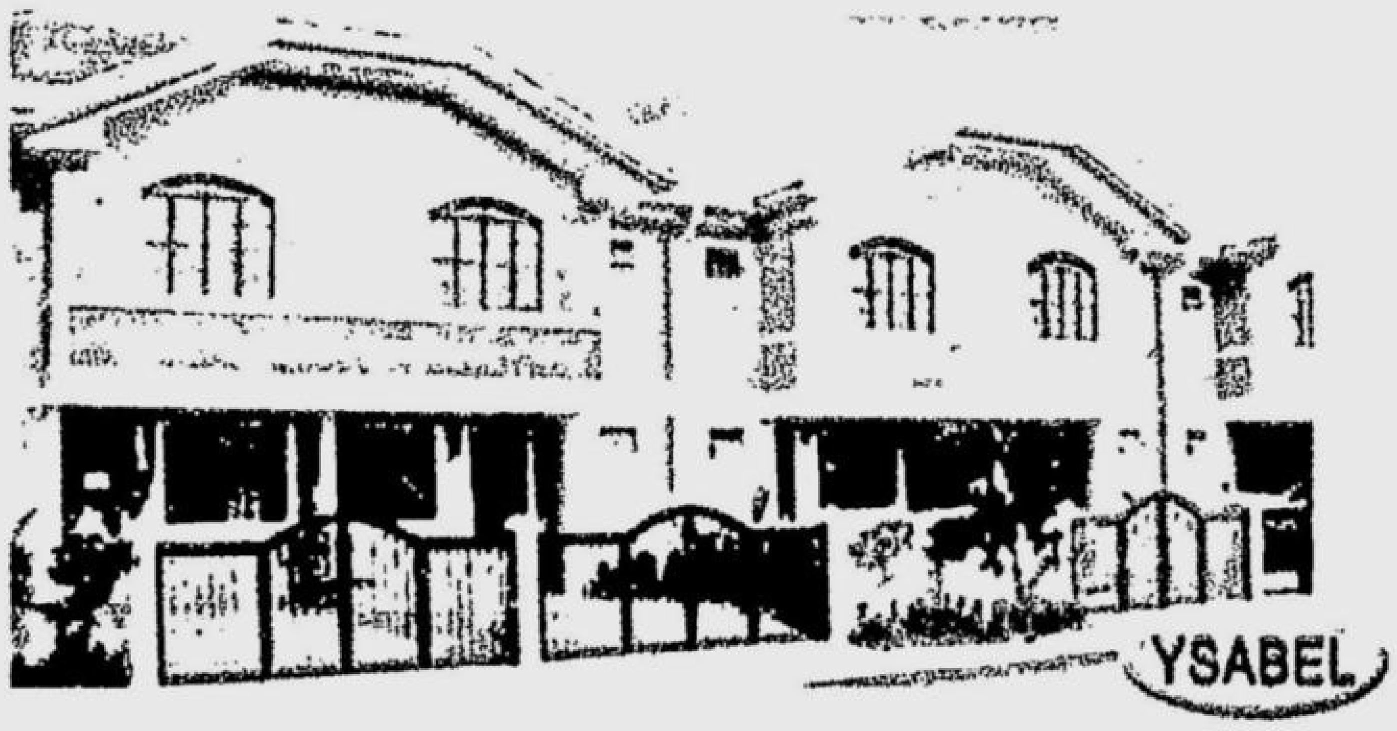

YSABEL

₱2.6M · 3 BR · 2 T&B · LOT AREA: 75 sq.m.
TOTAL IMPROVED AREA: 105.72 sq.m.

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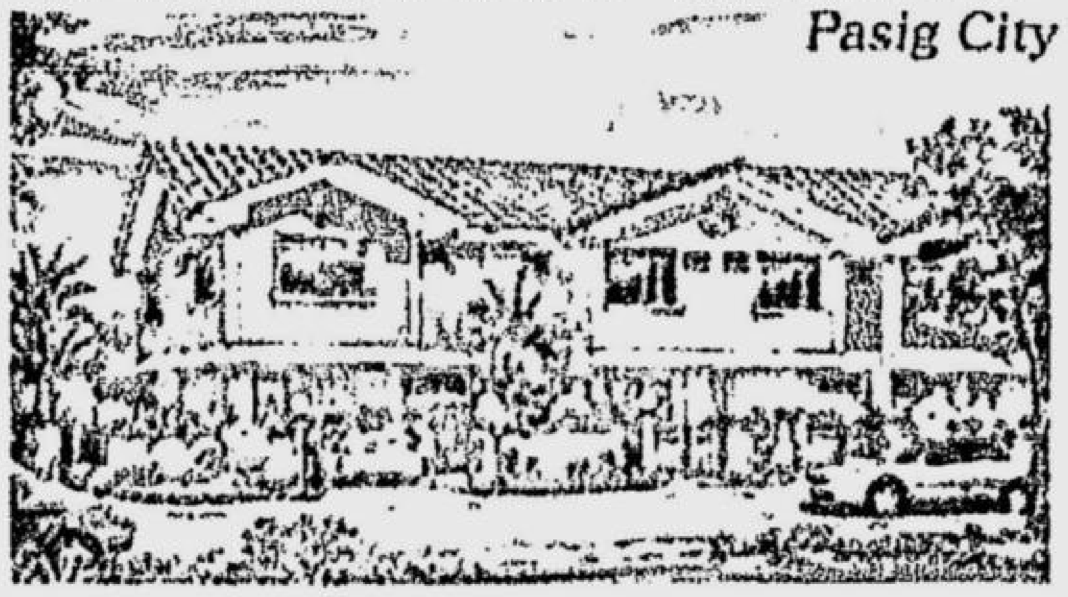

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₱1.98M · 3 BR · 3 T&B · LOT AREA: 60 sq.m.
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